A PROACTIVE, EXPERIENTIAL AND STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING APPROACH:

A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEO EDITING "App" IN A

TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM SETTING

by

Bruce Martin Kirk

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The use of social media App's has exploded in recent years. The purpose of this case study was to explore the use and implications of a social media App for shooting and editing video, when used in a higher education classroom where video projects are required. The study examined how the use of a student-centered App — in place of more traditional video and editing instruction — effected the student-learner model. The research questions included: RQ1 How does a social media video App impact student learning in a traditional higher education classroom? RQ2 What is the impact of a social media video App on the collaborative student-centered process? RQ3 Why does a social media video App enhance student-centered learning outcomes? The study used observation, in-depth individual participant interviews and a focus group of participants. The study found that participants favored the use of a video App for learning. Moreover, the case study pointed to a preference for collaborative, experiential student-centered learning. This self-directed and peer-involving learning approach resulted in more creative solutions, with participant benefits grouped into three themes: first, interaction was enhanced, with students reaching out to each other and voluntarily increasing use of digital tools; second, collaboration increased, with the increasingly iterative cycles of problem-solving involving both participant peers and digital tools; and, third, creation of assignment solutions that were experiential in nature, resembling the more complex and professional digital products of produced by organizations outside the classrooms.

Keywords: Higher education, applications, App's, social media, hands-on, advertising, public relations, social App's, experiential, digital natives, student

Copyright

Dedication/Acknowledgments

This manuscript is dedicated to my loving wife, June, and my two daughters, Jourdann and Kianna. They have sacrificed and managed without me present during nearly all of my free time, so that I could immerse myself in this research. I am eternally indebted to each of them for their love and support in the pursuit of my terminal degree. I also dedicate this work to my late father Dr. Charles F. Kirk, a life-long learner and higher education leader at Kent State University, who inspired me to complete this manuscript more than he could have ever imagined. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary work and assistance from my committee; Drs. Keith, Milacci, and Schwartz in guiding me through this process. Indeed, this was the supreme learning experience, thank you!

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List of Abbreviations

Advertising (Ad)

Adult Learning Theory (ADL)

Application (App)

Liberty University (LU)

National Research Council (NRC)

Public Relations (PR)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The fact that university students are not learning in the same fashion as previous generations hinges on a shift from traditional teacher-centered learning to learner-centered education (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2003). The framework in this research focused on a paradigm shift in learning and specifically on the Experiential Learning Theory (Dewey, 1948), the Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and the Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980) embraced by learner-centered university students. Research centered on how students understood a concept of proactive student-centered learning through an in-depth examination of the effects on learning of introducing a video editing App into a classroom. Students produced, executed, and constructed a finished video project in an experiential, learner-centered, hands-on collaborative method.

No longer are students satisfied with teachers downloading concepts and theories. But instead, students in higher education are seeking direct involvement in the learning process where the students are considered the key actors, thus active in their own learning. This then results in social interactions and collaboration, indeed promoted and managed by an instructor (Simonson et al., 2003). Gonzales and Nelson (2005) said "in addition, students in a project-based learning environment have more advanced collaborative and leadership skills than students taught in a lecture setting" (p. 15). Thus, these students are more in control of their learning, by setting their own learning goals, their own pace, and feeding off of each other when learning.

In contrast, teacher-centered learning focuses on the teacher simply transmitting knowledge from the instructor to the student (Harris & Cullen, 2008). Historically, Gonzales and Nelson (2005) reference the one-room schoolhouse which over the years then shifted to

more of an assembly-line mode of teaching, where a student moved from one teacher to the next to absorb information (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994). By contrast, student-centered learning shifts the focus on them (students), requiring the student to be actively engaged in the learning process (Blumberg, 2009). The advent of social media has opened new heretofore unexplored avenues for teaching in higher education.

Not only is a dialogue important, but now even more so two-way communication is vital, for reasons of both discovery and sharing of information (Reuben, 2008). Paulo Freire (1993) has long advocated for what he refers to as dialogue education. This moves beyond what may be called a monologue approach, into learned-centered or student-centered dialogue, which in essence invites the teacher to be a learner among the leaners (read students). Indeed Freire (1993) was joined by researcher Jane Vella (2000) who said this type of education then moves beyond lecture into interactive engagement, which Vella said calls for instructors designing classes for dialogue. Hasse (2014) posited "when a teacher moves away from hierarchical relationship with students into one of collaboration and collegial participation, the result is a learning environment framed by active dialogue" (p. 45). Thus, this notion of a dialogue in the learning environment, according to Hasse (2014) researching the work of Freire and Vella, focuses on learners being "invited to be decision-makers in their learning and accountability is offered as learning happens through practice and reflection" (p. 47). Vella (2000) stated "dialogue is the guiding principle. This means, however, that a teacher accepts a new role as resource person, not as expert; as guide, not as a professor; as mentor, not as instructor; as educator, not as facilitator" (p. 5).

Social media software leads to one of the keys in student-centered learning, which is interaction among people, as well as between people and with the data, which results in content

created by the users (Boyd, 2007). That means the role of the instructor is shifting to that of a guide, and controlling quality, but at the same time helping students find ways to contribute to the content and thus evaluating the learning process (Prensky, 2009). Jarvis (2006) said it well, that for adults, learning is becoming an interactive model, not what may have previously been seen as an isolated internal model. Vella (2000) posited "it is the practice of accountability, responsibility, and teamwork all in one, as learners engage with new content — theories, skills, and attitudes — to complete a learning task together" (p. 6). Precisely the model used in this case study research. Thus, the new definition of andragogy is to be expanded from passively consuming content to actively participating in a dialogue which leads to support of individual goals and needs (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007).

This paradigm shift results in the emphasis on learning being with students. Stack that against the teacher-centered learning model still prevalent in higher education, where the instructor has determined the what, when, how, and indeed if the information was even learned by the students (Blumberg, 2009). Mezirow (1991) referred to this process of student-centered learning as a change of view, with the learner becoming an active participant. In this model, instructors' expectations include learners not only being active in planning, but also in organizing and implementing the content learned (Wu & Huang, 2007).

Background

There is an explosion of the so-called digital age and the students who grew up with technology as they now populate classrooms in higher education (Jones & Shao, 2011). According to Jones and Shao (2011), students in U.S. universities are more technologically adept, as well as more sophisticated than ever with all things digital. This new type of learner is often dubbed a "digital native," as stated in the work of Palfrey and Gasser (2008). Today's

students populate the Net Generation as "digital natives" that enter higher education with vast and deep experiences in all technology and social media. They mark the first generation to grow up with everything from cell phones to instant messaging (Junco & Cole-Avent, 2008). Students come to a university with a wealth of pre-existing experiences in all aspects of social media (Garrett et al., 2011). These are also students with a self-concept that makes them quite independent, and thus they are used to directing their own learning. These same students are also most interested in finding ways to immediately apply new knowledge (Conlan, Grabowski, & Smith, 2003).

Thus the profile is that of a student who is quite comfortable in directing their own learning process, and then being able to instantly apply what they have learned. Thus, a Net Generation student "reacts fast and multitasks, prefers an experimental working approach, is communicative, and needs personalized learning and working environments" (Ras & Rech, 2009, p. 553). They are all about experiential learning where the experience they have in the process is potentially the key value to the education. Wenger (1999) said the value of education "is in social participation and the active involvement in community" (p. 61). Thus, learning is driven by social identity. So whether this involves classroom-based learning or strictly internet-based learning, these learning communities get formed around two key factors: shared values and identity (Palloff & Pratt, 1999). The National Research Council (NRC, 1999) conducted research into how effective higher education has shifted from a subject-centered focus to what researchers call performance-centered. Two aspects of that educational shift based on the NRC (1999) findings include learner-centered and community-centered education. Tapscott (2009) said this is "forcing a change in the model of pedagogy, from a teacher-focused model based on instruction to a student-focused model based on collaboration" (p. 11). Indeed, Jarvis (2006)

said learning for adults is an interactive phenomenon, not isolated. Merriam et al., (2007) said adults today want to involve others in their learning projects (read collaboration). Thus, as educators, the challenge is to create learning opportunities using the technology available today, where communities are then built (Anderson, 2008).

In a learner-centered model the skills and knowledge of students allow them to draw conclusions from their own experience(s). In the community-centered aspect, learners form a community and then learn best by sharing knowledge among the community members (Sharples, Taylor, & Vavoula, 2010). Directly linked to this research, Buckingham (2013) examined this new age of what he called "participatory culture," and looked at media education in a creative class. His conclusion in citing former British Prime Minster Jim Callaghan was that there is a need for education "to become more closely aligned with the 'world of work'" (Buckingham, 2013, p. 26). Considering the context in which this type of learning is occurring, Shuter (2012) suggested that using social media gives the communicator, in this case a student, control over construction, negotiation, and interpretation of their identities. This is consistent with Dovey (2006), who stated that higher education must move beyond the simple shift of knowledge and instead focus on the transference of information or skills required for employment. Too many employers are fast to complain that university graduates are hard pressed to apply what they know and, more critically, struggle with how to learn on their own (Blumberg, 2009). Thus, desired skills for graduates include being flexible and able to quickly adapt to change (Kahl & Venette, 2010). These are critical skills for workplace success, yet Kahl and Venette (2010) argued that they are also skills which are very hard to develop in teacher-centered learning.

The theories at the heart of this research included Experiential Learning Theory (Dewey, 1948), the Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980), and the Constructivist Learning Theory

(Vygotsky, 1978). Among those, the Adult Learning Theory is not isolated to adult learners, yet this theory appears to have direct application in this research. The literature supports the role of co-creator in the process of higher education where the student is the one helping to shape the educational process. These students want to take part in selecting the content and then creating the learning experience. McCombs and Whisler (1997) used this definition for learner-centered instruction:

> [A] perspective that couples a focus on individual learners and their needs as central to decisions about teaching and learning at both the school and classroom levels and in understanding of the research on the learning process, as it interacts with, informs, and is informed by teachers' understanding and experience of the process, how the process occurs, and how the learning process can be enhanced for all learners. (p. 34)

The next step for students is to make an immediate connection between the learning activity and their lives (Tate, 2004). This is a paradigm shift from how instructors teach when compared against how students learn (Weimer, 2013; Wohlfarth et al., 2008).

The problem in focus is that students in higher education today, possessing such elevated social media skill sets, are less attracted to traditional teaching methods. Yet they long for control of the content, the learning process to be hands-on, and their experience to count for something in the educational process. It is important to note that this research is not just centered on the learner, but also directly impacts the teacher. A paradigm shift has evolved where students are asking for university teachers to engage and demonstrate the relevance of the faculty members use of learning material(s) in the classroom. Little research appears to have been done on this topic of engaging and intersecting with university students in the classroom, specifically

with regard to the use of social media in a class where video is being taught and produced. Therefore, the gap in the literature on this unexplored topic examined if university students would engage and embrace the use of social media to replace traditional teaching tools where videos must be produced. In essence, this research explored how young people navigate between "traditional" and "new" media. "Our amazing, ever-changing technological world may seem overwhelming at times, but educators must rise to the challenge of closing the growing digital divide in education" (Mullen & Wedwick, 2008, p. 69).

This case study research proposed to identify student response to these questions and thus prepare university teachers with critical feedback on how to teach today's students by meeting them where they live, with social media. As Stake (1995) defined, "case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). Prior research appears to support meeting students at the social media crossroad, as young "digital natives" show an affinity for new media (McMillan & Morrison, 2006). Using technology in innovative ways and then showing that better methods exist while approaching both teaching and learning, becomes a positive path toward student success, while at the same time offering a new vision of education (Cowan, 2008).

Situation to Self

Serving as a professor at the site of this case study research, teacher-centered instruction is still embraced by some university faculty. However, it is this researcher's belief that opportunities to engage the students may well hinge on social media as the bridge when incorporated into student-centered learning. From personal experience, using the digital media in which students are already immersed may prove to be a link to connecting students to learning and knowledge. This research attempted to do that by conducting a qualitative case study and

moving as close as possible to the participants being studied. The case study is the preferred qualitative method especially "when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 2003, p. 1).

Stake (1995) explained that the purpose of a case study is to place "an interpreter in the field to observe the workings of the case, one who records objectively what is happening but simultaneously examines its meaning and redirects observation to refine or substantiate those meanings" (pp. 8-9). This research took place in the field (university classroom) where the participants work and learn. It is important to discern the contexts of what the participants are saying and as Guba and Lincoln (1988) stated, reduce the distance or separation between the researcher and the participants in class. Again, Stake (1995) suggested that "the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized more than the interpretations of those people studied, but the qualitative case researcher tries to preserve the *multiple realities*, the different and even contradictory views of what is happening" (p. 12). The paradigm of constructivism guided this study, whereby students in this research project were called upon to construct their own video and story content, including editing the final product, by the use of a social media App.

Problem Statement

The problem is the issue of present day learning styles among higher education students. This is particularly important as the practice has long been traditional teacher-based education, though Sharples, Taylor, and Vavoula (2010) argued that learner-centered education, enabling students to reason from their own experience, has strong advantages. Reichenberg & Singhal, 2013) said:

In previous generations, the teacher was the sole interpreter of knowledge for students, and books were the primary resource for information. The current tenor of education includes a desire to embrace educational technology but requires a certain shift on behalf of teachers in order to modernize the teaching-learning process (p. 44).

Paul (2013), considering today's "digital natives," said that these so-called traditional teaching and learning styles often practiced in a traditional classroom setting, might not be nearly as effective for the digital minds of today's students, seeking non-traditional methods of learning. Learners engage in the content in an active way by connecting the topic with their prior knowledge and experiences (Saulnier, 2009). The result is deeper learning as the student-centered learners interact, experience, and apply it (Saulnier, 2009). For the instructor, this makes the student an active partner in the learning steps with individual development being endless (Liu, Liu, & Qiao, 2006).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to explore the use and implications of a social media App for shooting and editing video, when used in a higher education classroom of junior or senior status where video projects are required. More specifically, the study sought to examine how the use of a user-centered social media application — in place of more traditional video and editing instruction — in a collaborative university class, affected academic interest and achievement in a traditional classroom setting, especially utilizing experiential learning.

Significance of the Study

The body and quality of empirical research studies specifically targeting constructivist learner-based teaching in higher education, most importantly when utilizing the mobile environment, was currently quite small. This is specifically true when isolated to social media.

There has been very little research done to thoroughly examine this approach in Higher Education, specifically the way instruction is designed, that has taken into account the extensive potential for teaching and learning with these devices and methods (Rajasingham, 2011). The body of literature points to the increased value of collaboration over traditonal teaching, especially when using social media technology, such as blogs, Wiki, or social networking (Moody, 2010).

Palfrey and Gasser (2008) believed the use of social media makes for active, communal learning through shared experiences and learning from one another and thus, social media's usage is about pedagogical relevancy and an alternate tool in the classroom learning process. Although, according to Mwanza-Simwami (2007), mobile learning has become a trend of sorts in academia; however, learning with mobile devices is an area of research still seen as new enough, that little research exists. "The advantages to applying the principle of user-generated content and collaborative knowledge building as a learning tool, appear to be quite beneficial in terms of student learning outcomes" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 17). Thus, the widely accepted theory of constructivism has been little tested when including social media tools for video production in a classroom versus traditional video production. Supporters of learner-centered education talk about the importance of the location. In fact, Zaiser (2010) pointed to several keys to learner-centered instruction. Most important may be that institutions of higher education need adaquate space for such activities to allow for students to interact, work in small groups, and adjust as needed for various learning projects (Zaiser, 2010).

The results of this research could be of value to higher education practitioners as they seek ways to integrate social media into their classrooms and to meet the "digital natives" where they live, while using social media to construct their learning. Much of the current literature on

mobile devices and learning in an educational setting has been quite focused, and thus has not gone beyond assessing how technology has been adopted in a classroom (Arrigo & Cipri, 2010), or research has been limited to using mobile devices for simple tasks such as accessing resources on campus, but not in an academic setting (Arreymbi & Draganova, 2008). Academic research examining the relationship between social media with university academics or teaching are much more difficult to find, especially when social media is involved. Further, this participant popluation is sufficiently unique in that it appears likely to advance knowledge in the field. What research is available in this area concluded Wiki was a valid tool for collaborative projects in school (Lian, Hoon, & Abdullah, 2011).

New steps in technology for using online and digital video is growing, though digital videos are rather new tools for learning. Al-Jarf (2011) posits they bring courses alive and allow the learner to use their visual and auditory senses to learn complex concepts and difficult procedures. There is little doubt that new technologies can act as the spark for change. However, equally important may be the conditions for this change and the specific roles played by technologies (Garrett et al., 2011).

Research Questions

The following questions guided this case study:

RQ1 How does the use of a social media video App impact student learning in a traditional higher education classroom?

RQ2 What is the impact of a social media video App on the collaborative student-centered learning process?

RQ3 How is experiential learning affected by the use of a video, shooting and editing App?

Research Plan

This qualitative case study collected, analyzed, and reported data using an intrinsic approach to understand what impact using a social media App had on proactively engaging with students in higher education. As Stake (1995) explained, "a case study is instrumental to accomplishing something other than understanding…" (p. 3). Stretching back to Dewey (1948), educators argued that for education to be successful the learner would need to be actively involved and participating. By using semi-structured interviews with the participants along with direct classroom observations and a focus group interview with all of the participants in this case study, this research utilized triangulation to interpret the rich data consistent with Creswell's (2007) case study model. Sources of data were collected and identified based on methods suggested by Yin (1984 & 2005), with the use of three qualitative methods: observation, participant interviews, and focus group interviews. This approach is well suited to the unique experiences the participants shared about their participation in a learner-centered approach to education (Moustakas, 1994), especially as regards the use of social media in a learning environment. A semi-structured interview was conducted with eight to ten open-ended questions of the participants, regarding their use of social media as a teaching tool in a learner-centered education model.

The qualitative case study was utilized to understand the effects on the learning through the introduction and use of a student-centered social video editing application in a classroom for university students in an undergraduate residential class. A qualitative case study provided a broader analysis of the quality of the effects taking place with students in contrast to the quantity.

The case study approach also allowed for understanding this learner-centered environment and providing an in-depth look into a particular setting which resulted in a descriptive narrative. The constructivist theory was examined to note if the participants were active and directly involved in learning creation. "This theory posits that meaning is created by the learner rather than passed down from educator to learner through rote" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 5). Thus using a social media App tool as in this research provided the communicator (read student), the control over construction, negotiation, and interpretation of their identities (Shuter, 2012). Throughout the study, data collection and analysis memos were kept and the data was analyzed by one to two other parties for reliability. This removed this researcher from any perception of bias in teaching similar media classes using the same social media tool. Data was categorized through coding and put into narrative and graphic form for further data analysis.

Delimitations and Limitations

The study focused on one higher education classroom in one discipline, Studio and Digital Art. The use of a social media App tool under this case study research was only being utilized in this classroom. The class chosen included primarily young adult learners of junior or senior level, near or above the age of 20. These students had to be upper class students with extensive social media experience who by these qualifiers were likely to prefer a student-centered learning environment. No specific social media App was being selected; therefore, one such delimitation in this case study was a broad choice of social media App's may be utilized in the student-centered learning observed in this case study. However, it is not the specific App that was used which made this case study valid. Indeed, the use of any social media App, if done in a student-centered learning environment which is hands-on and collaborative, sufficed to conduct this research on constructivist and experiential learning in a traditional classroom.

The limitations of this particular study emanated from only being able to select one class using a social media App for video projects. The confines of the sample location limited the ability to generalize the results of the study. Another potential limitation involved the demographic mix. Enrollment in the course selected matched past trends, the course was composed of 85% Caucasian and 15% African-American students. Further, the gender mix in the course included in this case study, skewed to a much higher female population. Thus the class demographics represented 65% female and 35% male. Therefore, the racial mixture in the course, and the gender differences, limited how representative the case study was, subsequently limiting the ability to generalize the results of the case study.

Definitions

The terms pertinent to this case study are listed and defined in this section.

1. *Adult Learning Theory* – These are students with an independent self-concept who can direct their own learning and also students who are interested in immediate application of knowledge. These are also students of the age motivated to learn by internal, rather than external, factors (Merriam, 2001).

2. *App* (Application) – Internet applications (small software tools that can deliver active and interactive content) that support interaction between mobile devices and the internet (O'Reilly, 2005).

3. *Constructivist Learning Theory* – This theory posits that meaning is created by the learner rather than passed down from educator to learner through rote (Tweedell, 2000).

4.   *Digital Age* - The students who grew up with technology as they now populate

classrooms in higher education (Jones & Shao, 2011).

5.   *Digital Native* – Students that enter higher education with vast and deep experience(s) in

all technology and social media (see social media below) (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008).

6.   *Experiential Learning Theory* – In the realm of learning correctly, we must look toward

embracing a learn-by-doing approach to education (Soloway, 1994).

7.   *Learner-Centered Learning* – These are students with a self-concept that makes them

quite independent and thus they are used to directing their own learning. These same

students are also most interested in finding ways to immediately apply new knowledge

(Conlan, Grabowski & Smith, 2003).

8.   *Project Based Learning* – The advantages to applying the principle of user-generated

content and collaborative knowledge building as a learning tool, appear to be quite

beneficial in terms of student learning outcomes (Vygotsky, 2011).

9.   *Social Media* – Considering social media, it is redefining not only how we relate to each

other but to organizations as well. The key is dialogue and two way communication for

the purpose of not only discovering but also sharing the information (Reuben, 2008).

10.   *Student-Centered Learning* – Student-centered learning shifts the focus on them

(students), requiring the student to be actively engaged in the learning process

(Blumberg, 2009).

11.   *Teacher-Centered Learning* - The teacher is the sole interpreter of knowledge for

students, and books were the primary resource for information. The current tenor of

education includes a desire to embrace educational technology, but requires a certain shift on behalf of teachers in order to modernize the teaching-learning process (Singhal, 2013).

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate a proactive, experiential, and student-centered learning approach. This study was focused on the effects of a social media video editing "App" (application) in a traditional classroom setting. These applications have also made possible new teaching methods and a rich environment for students to find alternative ways to learn. The purpose of this case study was to examine the nature of proactive student-centered learning through an in-depth examination of the effects on learning of introducing a student-centered social media video editing application in a higher education classroom. The study examined how the utilization of a user-centered social media application — in place of more traditional video and editing instruction — in a collaborative university class, affects academic interest and achievement in a traditional classroom setting, especially utilizing experiential learning.

A qualitative study was chosen as it provided an examination of a current environment in which the various interactions that took place could be recorded within their proper context, by providing an equally rich and detailed narrative (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). The case study used observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group data to capture the unique experiences of these learners. The participants were chosen purposefully and their interviews were considered through data analysis which was conducted through memos, coding, data triangulation, and rich description. Because of the growth in student-centered learning for these digital natives, versus traditional classroom-based lecture learning, this dissertation was able to provide a unique, hands-on, and fresh perspective on the topic.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This literature review highlights the educational value of incorporating student-created videos into a traditional learning environment. This specifically includes the creation of videos using a social media application, also referred to hereafter as a social media App, over the training and use of standard non-linear shooting and editing procedures. This review examines student understanding of the creation of video content for use in a residential class in a university, along with the production and execution, which include everything from pre-production to the actual video and audio gathering methods using social media, right through into editing of the final video project. The use of mobile devices as tools to learn could swing the educational paradigm, by shifting a traditional classroom learning center, to enhanced instruction utilizing proactive student–centered learning (Rogers, 2009). There is some precedent, as preparation for this qualitative case study uncovered an experiential learning source in student-generated video projects through the utilization of social media, in several institutions of higher education in Virginia as well as across the United States and abroad.

Indeed, some argue if the primary goal of higher education is to equip students on how to operate in the greater society, then it is argued that a paradigm shift must be implemented with how educational technology is utilized in a classroom setting. This encapsulates the purpose behind this case study. Gonzales and Nelson (2010) said it well, "this makes *how* we teach our students as important as *what* we teach our students" (p. 12). Gonzales and Nelson (2010) continued, " in contrast to a traditional education, which tends to be very teacher-centric with instruction designed around faculty interests and teaching styles, in a learner-centered environment, student needs and learning styles drive the educational process" (p. 14).

Theoretical Framework

Under what classroom circumstances does learning occur and what is the most effective approach to promoting that learning? The theoretical framework underlying this literature review provides the rationale for constructing a narrative from the literature review that emphasizes proactive, experiential learning based on the dialogue approach advocated by such engagement-oriented educators as Freire and Vella (2000), who call for instructors to move beyond lecture into the use of dialogue as an instructional tool. Dialogue with its consequent give-and-take is inherent in the approach advocated by Sthapornnanon, Sakulbumrungsil, Theeraroungchaisri, and Watcharadamrongkun (2009), who studied a social constructivist learning environment in an online course and concluded that "learning occurs when students share background information and participate in give and take of collaborative and cooperative activities" (p. 1).

Next, the delivery method of social media is examined vis-à-vis the learning outcomes produced in an experiential method of education, still in light of the trends produced by a more interactive and dialogue-based approach to instruction. This communication-driven revolution, the so called *Social Media*, touches nearly every facet of individuals' personal and business lives, relying as it does on the theoretical framework of instructional trends that emphasize dialogue and interaction. Higher Education is not the exception in this swing toward proactive learning and instruction. Already perceived as a place for sharing the latest knowledge with society, education is itself profoundly influenced by new social and interactive media, by creating new methods on its own, or revamping the old ways of educating (Kamenetz, 2009) and finding ways to take advantage of a growing trend toward participation. The response from educators to a greater understanding of the advantages of instructional dialogue is included in this review, in

light of the ever-increasing emphasis of researchers and education theorists on user-generated

learning experiences in the midst of a growing, participatory culture. Consequently, this review

includes the Theoretical Framework supporting dialogue and participation, including Knowles

(1980) Adult Learning Theory, the Experiential Learning Theory of Dewey (1948), as well as

Vygotsky's Constructivism Learning Theory (1978). While the case study touched on the

integration of information and communication technology, known as ICT, there was a special

emphasis on both Experiential Learning Theory and the Constructivist Learning Theory.

Media theorist McLuhan (1964) some half a century ago was quite profound with his

conclusion that "the medium is the message" (p. 23). In the same way, it can be said that the

simple message of instructional theorists is "the App is the instruction." Hence, the Nexis of

theory and literature. Given our new world of multimedia, this simple phrase and metaphorical

extension seems to define the importance of studying the use of a social media App in a higher

education setting. Furthermore, there is a relationship in how the medium — the App — impacts

not only the message itself, but how it is seen and comprehended (McLuhan & Gordon, 2003;

Safar & AlKhezzi, 2012). That then leads, for the sake of this case study, to the pedagogical

method, resulting in the use of the medium to accomplish learning (Safar & AlKhezzi, 2012).

Thus, it logically flows then that the educational systems should change to reflect the needs of

society. Many might argue however, that this specific shift in focus has been slow to follow

from the standpoint of our educational systems. Said another way, if it can be agreed that the

purpose behind higher education is to prepare students how to best operate in today's society, a

paradigm shift with regards to using educational technology in the classroom, must follow a

society that increasingly is based upon interaction and dialogue. "The integration of information

and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning permeates, and consequently

alters, the pedagogy and methodology of teaching and learning" (Van Der Westhuizen, Richter, & Nel, 2010, p. 561). Gonzales and Nelson (2010) support this position saying "as the *Information Age* continues to require knowledge workers who are capable of adapting to an every-changing workplace, our educational system needs to prepare students to succeed in such an environment" (p. 15).

Success for the student in "such an environment" demands a literature narrative that traces the growing importance of an adult-centered and interactive approach in the classroom learning environment. The importance of a conceptual baseline in such research, according to the work of Bogdan and Biklen (2007), is to function as a guide in collecting and then analyzing the data for high-quality research, which allows the construction of a literature narrative that puts dialogue directly in the crosshairs. Thus this research examined the Adult Learning Theory of Knowles (1980) as it applied to upper-class undergraduates and their expectations in a classroom learning environment — expectations that are directly linked to media usage, interactivity, and increased learning. Also touched upon was Dewey's (1948) Experiential Learning Theory to accentuate its critical role in a literature review that includes student-centered learning opportunities in a classroom setting. Later, there will be a close examination of the significance of Social Constructivism to learning based upon a more mature, dialogic approach, which Vygotsky (1978) posits as critical to classroom learning in higher education, where students feel more engaged as members of a team and thus are more willing to work toward a common goal.

Regardless of the field of learning, interaction and dialogue are foundational. Soloway (1994), although concerned with learning the sciences correctly and not video editing, urged educators to look toward embracing a learn-by-doing approach to education. Mansour (2010) was quick to add that before science education, in this case, could change, those teaching the

sciences must first demonstrate a change in their approach to educating. The literature supported this in a broader fashion as it related to the use of a social media App that was being studied in this research. By creating a solid base, a foundation for hands-on, student-centered learning, a guide was created to not only collect but also analyze the data and information from this research. Van Der Westhuizen, Richter, and Nel (2010) in their research on information and communication technology (ICT) "found that learners in classes where ICT was used as a teaching aid generally learned more than those in other classes, performed better on average in cognitive tests, learned faster, enjoyed the lessons more and were, in general, happier in their academic work" (p. 562).

Some of the literature suggested the effectiveness of this approach was due to the fact that it provided a means of closing the gap between how students live and function away from school, and then how they learn within their time in school. Considering social media, it is redefining not only how people relate to each other but to organizations as well, at first outside the classroom and now inside the classroom. The key is dialogue and two way communication for the purpose of not only discovering but also sharing the information (Reuben, 2008). According to Hussain (2012):

A university teacher should involve students in the learning process through activities aiming to inculcate academic & social skills among them. They would become capable of interpreting their knowledge according to situation(s) by making their own meaning of it. It would be broadening their vision and wisdom leading towards developing new knowledge. (p. 179)

Adult Learning Theory

At the very least, the literature of Adult Learning Theory, which began with Andragogy first developed by Malcolm Knowles (1980) more than three decades ago, provides one with a clear picture of the impact of the world outside the classroom on the world inside the classroom. Adults learn differently by virtue of the characteristics that accompany their demographics; those characteristics need to be addressed by the educator in order to provide successful instruction. This approach rather neatly fit into this research in social media's intersection with today's higher education, a more adult student body with technologically promoted dialoging abilities that are brought into the classroom. "Students of today are media-immersed in uploading and streaming videos to downloading music and blogging; today's students have never known a world without the internet, and therefore are referred to as *digital natives*" (Parks, 2008, p. 21). These so-called "digital natives," having grown up with everything digital in their world, therefore come to a university with a wealth of pre-existing experience in all things social media. Therefore, higher education students now considered adults and having grown up absorbed in a world where everything is accessible through an electronic screen, have each developed a learning style that is by and large visually driven. Thus, when considering the use of social media in learning, "in this sense, it is now realistic to consider learning objects on mobile devices as a practical option for student learning" (Jarvis & Dickie, 2010, p. 174).

And so we see a theoretical and narrative literature foundation that emphasizes that the skills used for social media, internet–based applications, can be transferred to the classroom through technology and pedagogical technique without much additional training. This can be accomplished through the scaffolding that students bring to the learning process, based upon prior knowledge and experiences. Conlan, Grabowski, and Smith (2003) posited five assumptions supporting andragogy which further promote the idea of bringing outside

experiences, technology, and active learning into the classroom. One of the assumptions, is that these are students with an independent self-concept who can direct their own learning and also students who are interested in immediate application of knowledge. "These are also student's motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors" (Merriam, 2001, p. 5). A critical distinction at this point comes from the father of andragogy, as Knowles (1980) said these principles are not exclusively applicable to adult education. As such, Merriam (2001) posited in regards to this theory of adult learning, that the designer "should involve learners in as many aspects of their education as possible and in the creation of a climate in which they can most fruitfully learn" (p. 7).

The research here focused on a key point from Knowles (1980), the concept that whatever the material being utilized in education, the success comes by making it learner-centered and the learner being primarily self-directed in the process — which also can be a description of the use of most Apps outside the classroom. The literature refers to this as the combination of experience and interpersonal exchange as the source of true learning. Thus another key component in the Adult Learning Theory is the opportunity for the student (learner) to make mistakes and thereby learn from them. However, this is not exclusive to the student; it must also incorporate a classroom climate that contributes to success. This means fostering creativity among trenchers, which translates into a supportive environment for teachers to take chances and implement new methods of instruction — such as student-centered learning where the use of new technology is not only encouraged, but required. In other words, going far beyond just using technology as a supplement but instead utilizing it as a primary means of education is the key to the constructivist approach to learning new material (Wong, Li, Tat-heung, & Tsz-ngong (2008).

As will be clarified later in this literature review, the Adult Learning Theory coupled with experiential and constructivist concepts includes the assumption that learning must not be limited to only a traditional school classroom experience where education is only mediated by a trained teacher. Thus, a literature review that weaves the key strands of learning theory, prior use, and understanding of student-centered instruction, and technology into a single all-inclusive narrative. Indeed, learning can be enhanced, this narrative tells one, where a hands-on student-centered learning structure is involved. Freire (1993) argued traditional education actually served to discourage exploration and learning through self-discovery. He used the term "banking system" to describe professors depositing bits of information into the minds of their students, only to require a withdrawal of knowledge later on an exam. As students mature, that stockpile of knowledge translates into a rich source for future learning that can be tapped by innovative educational methodologies. Thus, a mature student is motivated to learn in connection to their social roles and they want to find an immediate way to apply this new knowledge. The result, the student's orientation shifts from a simple subject centric focus to one of performance-centeredness (Knowles, 1980). Thus student-centered learners are active in the creation of knowledge, rather than previous positions as being external to it. So it is through a sense of community where students are proactive in the process of gaining knowledge, by interpreting, reflecting, and forming meaning.

Thus the question, does Adult Learning Theory move past its demographic boundaries into a greater understanding of how to achieve more effective instruction in other demographic components? One way of putting it, adult learning provides the key to all learning. "It (Adult Learning Theory) should involve learners in as many aspects of their education as possible and in the creation of a climate in which they can most fruitfully learn" (Merriam, 2001, p. 7). The

National Research Council here in the United States compiled research across the country into how effective education is across all ages and subject areas. The conclusion (National Research Council, 1999):

A) *learner centered*: It builds on the skills and knowledge of students, enabling them to reason from their own experience;

B) *Knowledge centered*: The curriculum is built from a sound foundation of validated knowledge, taught efficiently and with inventive use of concepts and methods;

C) *Assessment centered*: Assessment is matched to the ability of the learners, offering diagnosis and formative guidance that builds on success;

D) *Community centered*: Successful learners form a mutually promotive community, sharing knowledge and supporting less able students.

The literature supports educational theory which together shows that by enhancing the learning experience of a student-centered learning environment, the experience may be richer for students. Adult students usually adapt very easily to the role of co-creator in the process of higher education instruction. Thus when examining the Adult Learning Theory, these students learn best when (a) they play a part in selecting the content and then get to create the actual learning experience, and (b) can make an immediate connection between these learning activities and their day-to-day lives (Knowles, 1980; Tate, 2004). Effective learning by adults hinges on new knowledge, clear understanding, new skills, and a sense of values and attitudes that are drawn out once the learning event is applied in the context of real-life scenarios (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

"Understanding learning in adulthood is like piecing together a puzzle: there are many parts that must be fitted together before the total picture emerges" (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 193). Merriam (1993) posited that this puzzle involves the individual learner, the place and method that the learning takes place, and finally the actual learning process being employed. "Indeed, adult learning is the 'glue' holding together a field [adult education] that is diverse in content, clientele, and delivery systems" (Merriam, 1993, p. 5).

In basic terms, adult learning is considered to be the interactive relationship of theory and practice, which, when combined with the various narratives on classroom learning, provide the key to the success of App-type approaches. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) approached the theory of adult learning on two inter-related levels: (a) a learning process that results in the individual changing through the learning steps, and (b) a related change which involves the organization. Among the andragogical assumptions to be made about the adult learner:

1. Adults have a need to know why they are learning.
2. Adults learn the most by doing, hands-on.
3. Adults tap into their experiences to learn.
4. Adults learn the most when the subject being learned can be put to immediate use.

Knowles's Adult Learning Theory (1980), andragogy, exists on five assumptions about how adults learn: as students mature they move more to self-direction; experience is invaluable for learning; being ready to learn has a lot to do with how developed the social role of the student is; as students mature their learning becomes more problem centered; and with experience and age, learners are far more driven by internal rather than external factors (Knowles, 1969;

Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Thus the lessons of Adult Learning Theory can be applied to all learning.

Experiential Learning Theory

Therefore, examining the Experiential Learning Theory in this student-centered learning environment can include looking at pedagogy and andragogy side-by-side. Knowles (1980) acknowledged the two terms "pedagogy-andragogy represents a continuum ranging from teacher-directed to student directed learning, and that both approaches are appropriate with children and adults, depending on the situation" (as cited in Merriam, 1993, p. 8). In Merriam's work from twenty years ago, the emphasis was shifting to experiential learning, a student-directed form of education. "There is … no point in the philosophy of education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process" (Dewey, 1948, p. 77). This from theorist and scholar John Dewey the father of experiential learning. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) concur with Dewey's Experiential Learning Theory (1948), that the adult learner brings his or her experience to the table. Thus, adults tend to connect what they are learning to previous experiences and in many cases, they also can make a connection to something they might come across in the future.

Gonzales and Nelson (2005) stated it clearly, "experiential learning is the process where learners actively engage in creating their own knowledge; experience is the teacher. Students learn by doing — rather than by listening — in a hands-on, meaningful and highly applied environment" (p. 12). According to Bain (2004), as referenced in Smart, Witt, and Scott (2012), "when we encounter new material, we try to comprehend it in terms of something we think we

already know" (p. 26). Fascinating about this outgrowth of experiential learning is the timing. The notion that somehow education was connected to our life's experiences, and furthermore that for the educational experience to be successful the learner would need to be actively involved and particpating, was quite radical at the time, decades ago (Dewey, 1948; Tweedell, 2000). So the distinguishing role of experiential learning is the role that experience plays in the learning process. This learning style is described by Reichenberg (2014) as "an affinity for fluency in mutiple media and in simulation based virtual settings, and communal learning, involving diverse, tacit, situated experience with knowledge distributed across a community and a context as well as within an individual" (p. 22).

However, even among education scholars, there are two divergent views of experiential learning: (a) it is defined as a method of learning which affords students the opportunity to make a direct application of new knowledge obtained in a relevent setting; (b) or it is defined as education that takes place by directly engaging in the events of life. Some, such as John Dewey, maintain that students learn by doing. Half-a-century ago Houle (1961) posited:

> While the desire and the ability to learn are not shared equally by everyone, both can be fostered by good teaching, by careful guidance, by building and enlarging sympathetic enclaves, and by providing a range of educational opportunities. These tasks are too great for partial and divided efforts. The inquiring minds of the past have produced most of the advances of civilization. Our hopes for the future must rest in large measure on our capacity to increase the number and the ability of those who continue their lives to share in the benefits and the pleasures of intelligence. (p. 36)

Thus the literature suggests a link between the theoretical and the practical in student-centered learning and the core of the teaching process in this model hinges on the environments where students interact and learn. Dewey (1948) believed that one does not educate directly, but instead education is indirect and therefore tied to the environment. Dewey's approach led to the groundwork for the lifelong learning movement. He further stated that the best evidence of learning happens in a higher education setting which will not build a roadblock to experience. This led Dewey (1948) to believe that tradition and real growth are incompatible. A so-called progressive educational site, in his mind, will embrace learning by reorganizing the surroundings to enhance growth. Dewey (1948) perceived that the success of educational institutions would be determined by if or how that university can unlock the hold onto experience as a tool to learn. "Thus, while the development of media education in vocational and pre-vocational courses has been regarded by some as a process of compromise — if not outright capitulation — others have seen it as a valuable opportunity to build links between 'theoretical' and 'practical' elements of the subject" (Buckingham, 1995, p. 6-7). Interestingly, as far back as 1976 at Oxford, Labour Prime Minister Jim Callaghan "proclaimed the need for education to become more closely aligned with the 'world of work'" (Buckingham, 2013, p. 26).

An old Chinese proverb summarizes the learner-centered premise quite nicely; "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand" (Confucius, circa 450 BC).

What does this mean? While Experiential learning forms the core of many popular theories of effective instruction, that same Experiential learning provides the foundational explanations for the success of much of the research into effective learning outcomes. Consequently, Experiential learning is:

a) A process of setting goals, thinking, planning, experimenting, and decision making and then action. On the back side it involves observing, reflecting, and reviewing.

b) After doing something, then evaluating what it is like, it culminates in the learner's reaction and identifying the uniqueness of the individual learner's experience.

Effective learning is, to a large degree, substantially experiential, so the literature tells researchers. It also tells scholars that, in the same way, successful elements of a variety of learning theories and practices are also experiential.

Constructivist Learning Theory

Moving toward the Constructivist Learning Theory, according to Sianez, Fugere, and Lennon (2010), "historical records have indicated that students have engaged in hands-on activities since the 1860s with the movement of various educational systems such as the Russian system and the Sloyd system" (p. 35). Again, "hands-on." Therefore, although the research in this case study, in many ways, ran contrary to traditional learning methods and related theories, it simply took another step in the narrative constructed through this intertwining of learning theory and research. Thus, the Constructivist Learning Theory (1978) comes alongside the previosuly discussed Experiential Learning Theory (1948) and helps to embrace the foundation of a hands-on, "doing" formula for learning in today's higher education. Fosnot (1996) refers to three important elements in Constructivism; the social context of learning, the experience of each individual student, and the key element, the student's constructing the meaning that follows from his or her experience. New knowledge gained through the constructivist method is built through what is called scaffolding, or new knowledge built upon prior knowledge. The other key component of this learning theory is knowledge gained through active interaction with the

material or subject mattter — versus passive interaction — more aligned with the older

traditional teaching methods. An easy image for this is the teacher who plays the role of "guide

on the side," rather than the old adage of "sage on the stage" (Fosnot, 1996). Consider project-

based learning where the instructional approach prepares students for success in today's

workplace, as teams of students work through complex problems that serve as a catalyst for

learning (Thomas, 2000). Gonzales and Nelson (2005) put it this way:

> Project-based learning bridges the gap between academic philosophies and real-world
>
> application [by giving students practical experience] that allows students to graduate with
>
> a much wider skill set, and enter the business world extremely well prepared in
>
> comparison to computer science students who are taught in a traditional academic
>
> environment. (p. 14)

In addition to the real-world benefit of this student-centered learning, is the all important

critical thinking skills so many employers seek. Gonzales and Nelson (2005) explain it this way:

> Because students have an opportunity to get into the trenches and confront the complex,
>
> messy aspects of real-world projects, students who learn in this type of setting have a
>
> more sophisticated understanding of the subject matter, as well as better technical and
>
> collaborative skills. As students face numerous ill-structured problems, that they have to
>
> work through, their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills are significantly better
>
> than students who have learned in a traditional setting. (p. 15)

The Constructivist Theory rejects the assumption that learning only occurs in a school

classroom, where a trained teacher serves as the mediator. In this, it comes down on the same

side as other prominent learning theories, in that interactivity and student problem-solving

provide the core. At the very least the literature points to the professor no longer being viewed as the sole expert, simply imparting knowledge or downloading facts, but instead is viewed as a co-learner in student-centered education. Van Der Westhuizen, Richter, and Nel (2010) also saw the constructivist approach as focusing on problem-solving, "the provision of stimulating learning environments, cooperative learning, promotion of learning through exploration and reliable assessment methods (Roblyer et al., 1997; Abdal-Haqq, 1998). The constructivist approach therefore aims at enabling learners to manage their own learning and to develop metacognitive skills in the process (Ram, 1996)" (p. 562). In this approach to learner-centered learning, gone are the days of simple knowledge transferral from a teacher. To build upon that Stage, Nuller, Kinzie, and Simmons, 1998 said:

> Constructivists approaches emphasize learners' actively constructing their own knowledge rather than passively receiving information transmitted to them from teachers and textbooks. From a constructivist perspective, knowledge cannot simply be given to students: Students must construct their own meanings. (p. 35)

A student-centered focus impacts the literature context as higher education is learning about change. Thus Strudler (2010) said, "The fact is, though, nearly the entire field of technology and education is about change in some way. It's about the dreams of what could be, the realities of what is, and the efforts to whittle away at the gap between the two" (p. 221). "That the heart of learning is located within hands-on learning. From elementary to college-level science, research has shown that learning takes place when advancements in technology flourish" (Byrum, 2014, p. 36). Thus this case study focused on a social media App used in a student-centered learning environment, as evidence of that very technology cited above.

Learning, learning theory, and technology intersect, it is evident, in ways not thought possible just a few years ago.

With the Constructivist Theory, there is a sharp distinction and abrupt shift from a teacher-centered learning experience as with traditional education, to what is clearly a student driven focus, again showing that the major theories in education are similar when it comes to emphasis on student-centered learning. The student is urged, not required, to be actively engaged in the process of learning under a Constructivist model. Cordova and Lepper (1996) found if students are given options with regard to a digital task, motivation increases and that in turn results in much higher engagement. Nearly two decades ago outside the United States, "outcome-based education (OBE) was phased in in South Africa in 1997 and it places emphasis on learner-centered education" (South African Department of Education, 1997). Furthermore, and best of all, all of this translates into what is seen as a much deeper level of learning and that is often accomplished in a much shorter window of time. Albanese and Mitchell (1993) concluded that students are more motivated to learn when they are the ones asking the questions, which is generated by their need to know something.

Applied Learning Impact

One sees a positive impact when applied learning, or student-centered learning, is the focus of the educational method. Research with younger childen of elementary age, for example, shows that the attitude a child displays tends to be more positive when some task in schooling allows for choice (Schraw, Flowerday, & Reisetter, 1998). Aligned with that, studies of young readers, according to Guthrie (2008), indicated the greater control they thought they actually had, the more likely that these students would actually engage in reading. Hussain (2012) pointed to:

A study conducted by Santmire, Guiraud, and Grosskopf (1999) and compared learning achievmeent of two groups of elementary school students. The researchers found that the students who learned through social-constructivist approach to education and took a standardized test secured higher grades than their counterparts who were instructed traditionally in the classroom. (p. 181)

Similarily, Pratton and Hales (1986) looked at the influence of such constructivisit participation in learning achievement. They found higher scores for those students in the teaching learning process than students taught in a traditional lecture-style classroom. They found more time spent on thinking, responding, and verifying what was learned. Thus, active participation (constructivism) was proved to be more efficient for holding motivation and passion for the new knowledge. Hussain (2012) studied Master of Arts in Education students in a qualititavie research class. He designed activities to engage students in a constructivist approach to learning. The researcher initially observed a reluctance to take initiative among students and to work together on assigned tasks. As the semester progressed, the researcher observed the MA students "cooperating with each other by sharing learning experiences, activities, and information" (p. 182). By the conclusion Hussain (2012) observed "that learning under constructivist approach students enjoyed academic autonomy — having benefits of the self-directed learning making them independent and self-decisive in their learning choices" (p. 182). Overall, it appeared to empower the MA students by lessening their dependency on teachers. By the end, the students in this MA study "facilitated each other in preparing assignments, presentations and other academic activities" (p. 183).

Similarly, Jonassen and Reeves (1996) found that the use of technology in education adds cognitive tools when a student is asked to think, solve a problem, or are actually in the process of

learning. So taking that to student-centered learning and sticking with the cognitive aspect, this type of learning requires a shift from the standard of "instructor-directed learning to activities that include establishing individual learning goals as well as seeking, anticipating, and assessing those individual needs and goals" (Reichenberg, 2014, p. 31).

Students in higher education today may use a vehicle by which they can interact, be proactive in their learning, and thus interpret their experiences. Indeed, Knowles (1980) argued that adults need to see the practical side to be motivated to learn. So that the knowledge gained by the student under the Constructivist Theory, is thereby "constructed" and not simply transmitted from teacher to student, as in the traditional sense of classroom learning. Information is gathered first by a student's reaction to the environment where learning is taking place, thus the student-centered learning influences the choice students make either in some action or by their beliefs (Massaro & Cohen, 1993). Therefore this type of learning commands a significant shift in the role of the instructor. As stated by Smart, Witt, and Scott (2012):

> From an all-wise source of information to a facilitator of learning — a shift critical to a learner-centered class (Weimer, 2002). As important as teacher-student interactions are, student-student and student-information relationships can be equally important. The shift in focus to active and reflective learning helps strudents create a learning community where both students and the instructor are empowered to question and to make meaning, and all are invigorated in this phenomenon we call learning. (p. 402)

By being proactive, the literature points to how learners negotiate the meaning that accompanies their experiences. Thus, learner-centered education makes the student an active participant, by being immersed in the learning that they construct — so it can be concluded by

reviews of the literature that also takes into account the keen intelligence of major learning theorists in the past century. Indeed, underlying all theories of learner-centered education is the notion that the learning process must be active, and thereby must involve the learner directly. "This theory posits that meaning is created by the learner rather than passed down from educator to learner through rote" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 5). The use of social media affords the communicator, either student or teacher, maximum control over construction, negotitation and interpretation of their identities (Shuter, 2012). This stands in sharp contrast to traditonal university educational design — which tends to hinder absorption of knowledge with the focus being on specific blocks of knowledge — versus interactive, where the knowledge is constructed not transmitted. Thus, constructivism has seen a surge in popularity through the past several years as education has shifted "from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach. Traditional teaching has too often been based on a passive lecture model, dependant on an expert teacher who funnels knowledge into the somewhat rententive minds of students" (Smart, Witt, & Scott, 2012, p. 392).

Constructivism saw its first application very vigorously applied to innovating classrooms in such areas as math, science, and literature. "This new approach to learning contributes to the thread of thinking that produces an adult model that stresses learning over teaching" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 5). Much as with the Experiential Learning Theory (1948), this Constructivist Learning Theory (1978) allows for learners to construct a new reality for themselves, all centered around their experiences in life. The direct application of the Constructivist Learning Theory (1978) to this research project is that constructivists "require a curriculum that guides their learning without limiting the unique process of the creation of knowledge" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 5). It

should be noted, however, that the learning theories find common cause in positing active, student-centered approaches.

Sharples, Taylor, and Vavoula (2010) posited in their research the following conclusions about the constructivist approach to learning as:

> An active process of building knowledge and skills through practice within a supportive community. It comprises not only a process of continual personal development and enrichment, but also the possibility of rapid and radical conceptual change (p. 42).

Hussain (2012) said in a constructivist setting, students play an active role in learning. Indeed, "the study of Lord, Travis, Magill and King (2005) revealed greater effects of constructivist learning (learner-centered) approach on weekly test scores of srudents as compared to students' scores in traditional or teacher-centered environment" (p. 180). Further exploring the literature, the Constructivist Learning Theory (1978) parallels the Experiential Learning Theory in that prior knowledge and experience strongly impact the educational process for the student in this highly collaborative environment. Long considered the father of social constructivism, Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) held that knowledge was attained by a combination of dialogue and interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Said another way, learning is enhanced and knowledge accessed, when students have time to interact in social settings, where student-centered learning takes place. That means knowledge is co-constructed, with the teacher asking far more than telling the student. Thus, Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development plays into this, by comparing independent problem solving, solving

problems under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable colleagues, which is what is being discussed in the constructivist approach with student-centered learning.

Successful learning is said to result in an internal dialogue or intrapsychological tool that can be used in the future across varying situations (Vygotsky, 1978; Marsh & Ketterer, 2005). This practice of scaffolding, as it is known in education, can then be kept in the memory and the learner can draw upon it when needed to make sense of their environment. Successful learning is thought to build an *intrapsychological* tool that can be utilized in various situations in the future (Vygotsky, 1978; Marsh & Ketterer, 2005). A distinction is necessary here, as *knowledge* as previously offered is co-constructed. Whereas the term *learning* is different and considered instead an internal process that occurs within each individual learner. Thus the constructivist approach is defined as learning by doing, which manifests itself in various forms, including cooperative learning, experiential learning as previously stated, problem-based learning, and inquiry learning (Hussain & Sultan, 2010). Similarly, Dhindsa and Emran (2006) state that knowledge is constructed through a variety of means, including interaction with the technology, as in this case study with the social media App. Hussain (2012) posited that constructivists are active stake holders, which offers students the opportunity for cooperative and collaborative learning.

Therefore, learning is enhanced by use of student-centered learning, which is to say that new meaning to the material being learned is being constructed by the students. Byrum (2014) examined a report known as the *Nation's Report Card*, comparing 2009 to 2011 in science education. Constructivism ranked high among teachers who were asked about the frequency of hands-on projects; furthermore, there was a direct correlation between the frequency of projects and acheivement posted by students. The more frequently teachers provided a hands-on learning

environment for their students, the higher the students scored on the assessment (National Center

for Educational Statistics, 2012, p. 30).

Powell and Kaline (2009) "stated that social interactions were vital to the success of the

learning process and that for a classroom to be effective the interaction among students must be

present" (as cited in Byrum, 2014, p. 46). This interaction for joint communication is most

productive with collaborative and shared knowledge. The result is knowledge that is constructed

as each group member adds in their own expertise. In studies involving hands-on science

education, learning took place through each student's experiences but equally important was the

knowledge gained through manipulation of an object being examined. In this case study

research, the social media App was that tool which students manipulated as they learned

together. Thornton (2010) found students learned the most when some form of active

engagement in a classroom was present. Schrand (2008) pointed to this process of active

learning as contributing higher-order thinking and exploration on the part of the student-centered

learning that takes place. Finally, Gado, Ferguson, and van't Hooft (2006) found that combining

hands-on learning with technology brings two results: higher engagement in the subject, and

student's asking more questions about the content being studied.

<div align="center">**Related Literature**</div>

Interactive Learning and Digital Education

With the use of digital education, through such methods as a social media App, more

interactive learning is taking place, which comes through the absence of traditional education

methods. The process of learning through education, through the methods of Experiential

Learning Theory or Constructivist Learning Theory (1978) are on some level employing

interactive learning, in this instance applied to the digital application area. In some education cirlces, this is also seen as collaborative learning and as such, has become widely respected. One might say, then, that the study of the use of a digital App in enhancing the learning of video editing in a classroom lies at the Nexis of all major strands of learning theory and study of practices. This growing emphasis on interactive learning marks, as has been previously offered in this research, a major paradigm shift: from teaching to learning. Tweedell (2000) said that interactive learning has become a proven method for increasing both pure comprehension and depth of knowledge. "In interactive learning, the instructor de-emphasizes the position of 'authority' and instead become a 'consultant' in small group discussions" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 10).

While interactive learning has been used in education, especially as it relates to the application of experiential techniques, the emphasis has been on the use of, say, video editing in the classroom as an end in and of itself. Yerrick, Ross, and Molebash (2005), for example, explored the advantages of video editing in training science teachers. A study such as this, the one proposed, is moving out in a tradition that, in fact, lacks tradition; the effects of App use on learning and instructional processes in the actual field of video editing, as in other applied fields, such as engineering sciences"from a user-centered perspective are scarce" (DeSa & Churchill, 2012, p. 223). This was the focus of the research, and not on the effectiveness of the technological refinement of the processes with which the video editing was applied in the new era of digital interactive and social tool development.

Thus, so-called situated knowledge is considered to be of a higher order, in large part because it places knowledge in the daily course of living. "Through interactions learners negotiate the meaning of their experiences. Therefore, learners are active participants in the

creation of knowledge rather than being external to it" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 10). Hussain (2012) cited the connection to the real world as posited by Petraglia (1998) who stated "that instructors should develop learning materials and learning environments corresponding to the real world and/or situation of learners to interact accordingly seems appropriate for higher education classrooms" (p. 180). With interactive learning so well considered in the literature, along with experiential and constructivist learning, one might wonder why then would a lecture method still exist. All three of these learning tools call for a giant shift: from a focus on teaching, to instead a focus on learning. Many scholars support "an academic space that encourages collaborative learning as ideal for critical thinking. This collaboration brings into the classroom interpersonal skills and intellectual stimulation" (Kienzler, 2001, p. 323).

With this research examining the role of a form of social media, and its proactive inclusion with students in higher education, one must note that this is not about just another type of educational interaction. For to do that is to miss the broader point (Sharples, Taylor, & Vavoula, 2010):

> Every era of technology has, to some extent, formed education in its own image. In the era of mass print literacy, the textbook was the medium of instruction, and a prime goal of the education system was effective transmission of the canons of scholarship. During the computer era of the past fifty years, education has been reconceptualised around the construction of knowledge through information processing, modeling and interaction. For the era of mobile technology, we may come to conceive of education as conversation in context, enabled by continual interaction through and with personal and mobile technology. (p. 8)

In today's ever changing world of education, mobile technology and social media could easily supersede traditional teaching, especially among younger "digital natives." These students who were born after 1980 have benefitted by using Facebook, Wikis, or a myriad of social media App's as was included in this research, which allowed social media to position students and instructors in their own virtual communities of practice. Many educators are utilizing tools such as blogs, wikis, or social networks as a means of motivating their students. "Educators attempting to integrate technology into their teaching, face a variety of challenges in today's classrooms" (Cowan, 2008, p. 55). In these communities of practice, then, student-centered learning specifically permits students who bring their unique experiences to learning the opportunity to take ownership of their education. This is accomplished through the individual student becoming active in the process to create knowledge. Luckin et al. (2009) posited that using Web 2.0 technologies to collaborate only serves to deepen the engagement of students by use of peer review as well as the all important shared purpose. As has been stated, this results in the rich environment of user-generated content by students, rather than the traditional format of the instructor simply disseminating information.

Considering today's student as a "digital native," "in short, these so-called traditional teaching-learning styles and practices might not be effective for the digital minds" (Paul, 2013, p. 409). While critics may position this as the end point being the same, considering the lessons learned or knowledge gained, it is the journey as well as the benefit to the student and the learning community as a whole which improves through the process. It is student engagement that results in effective learning. Johnson and Johnson (1999) said that effective learning comes through personal involvement in the learning, which is directly tied to student-centered learning. "Indeed, when teachers witnessed the impact of technology on their students' learning, they were

motivated to experiment with additional technologies in their teaching" (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010, p. 277). Therefore, to thoroughly engage "digital natives," it is worthy to note the youngest have lived much of their lives interacting by using mobile technology on social networking sites. This, however, is just the start of the message (Vygotsky, 2011):

> The lives of these students are firmly experienced through technology, the seamless embedding of social media into the lived experience of an entire generation. And if the social and cultural identity of Digital Natives is constructed through these media, then it is of utmost importance that we, as instructors, are able to carefuly leverage the possibilities of collaborative knowledge building in tandem with the benefits of traditional classroom instruction. (p. 41)

In the case of this intrinsic case study, a single social media App was under examination through the exploratory research. Similarly, in the work "Friending" by Vygotsky (2011), two case studies were offered in that research — one using Facebook, the other using a course Wiki. Both demonstrated the integration of social media into traditional style classrooms. The first case study focused on a freshman-level communication studies course called *Media Literacy*. The elective course pulled a diversity of students from a myriad of majors. The course examines how to critically analyze media and deconstruct media messages. To encourage student discussion and discourage memorizing the material, a course Facebook page was created for the Spring 2010 sections. "Students (n=30) were required to respond via Facebook to specific questions posed during the traditional class period. They were then asked to engage in a virtual discussion that could clarify more advanced comments in a non-threatening, time-restricted environment" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 8). The three goals designed in that research included as the first goal, an inscreased particpatation among students. The second goal that research focused on

was testing owenership in not only course content, but also course design and structure. The third and final goal of that research was involving a shared learning experience where the students were encouraged to learn from one another.

Students then took a survey after the course ended to address the goals. All of the students in the course had an active Facebook account when the research began. "That students were familiar with Facebook did not make its transition from social medium to pedagogical tool any easier. Some students were reluctant for their social and academic lives to cross paths; others questioned how the site could benefit their education" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 9). Therefore, the professor in this experiment provided a second Facebook profile specifically for academic purposes for this class. Over the course of the semester, and once consistent use of Facebook was reached, Facebook became more of a desired space where students asked questions and looked for answers from one another.

In reviewing the existing literature, which is quite limited (and, in the case of video editing, seemingly nonexistant at this point), on social media App's being tested in a classroom setting, one finds an interesting case study. "Students (n=30) who participated in the survey at the semester's end acknowledged the intended shared learning experience, but most readily noted their increase in awareness of classmates' opinions. Fourteen students believed they had learned more from the class because of their particpation with Facebook, while 10 were unsure" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 10). In one student's response to using social media, Facebook, in an academic setting they wrote: "It was quick and made me think about certain media. I saw how different people interpreted different messages" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 10). Yet the use of social media in the academic sense was uncharted (Vygotsky, 2011):

Students' uncertainty regarding general knowledge gained through Facebook

was not surprising, particularly because of the inexperience the students had

with SNS (social networking sites) being used as a pedagogical tool. Only one

of the 30 students had ever taken a class that used SNS with regularity, so students first

had to decide for themselves if they believed a potential existed to gain knowledge from a

technology that had previosuly been relevant only for socialization purposes. If students

were able to see Facebook in that light, they could go on to determine if they had learned

more because of its implementation. (p. 11)

Several pedagogical methodologies marrying social media and academia were tried in 2011 in

business communication classrooms across the United States. At Acadia University, Kendra

Carmichael worked with virtual student teams interacting in AxeCorp, a Second Life

corporation. Students at both Southern Connecticut State University and Central Michigan

University developed social media projects involving clients. At Southern Connecticut, Robert

McEachern created Facebook internships, while at Central Michigan, James Melton's business

classes developed a promotional campaign, using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and search

engine optimization (SEO). At the University of Texas at Austin, Orlando Kelm examined "the

relationship between social constructivism and the pedagogical use of social media via a

descrpition of assignments in his Global Connections course. During a 2-week study tour of

China, students were required to post comments in the class blog, photos to a database, and short

videos to YouTube, all of which captured their experiences, allowed them to interact online, and

left a rich legacy for future students" (Dyrud, 2011, p. 477).

The second case study offered by "Friending" Vygotsky (2011) focused on Wiki's. This

term is most often used to describe user-edited webpages that link a community through peer

production. This social media tool was used during the Spring and Fall of 2010, in a number of

courses from introductory to advanced in the following ways: The use of collaborative group

projects, usingWiki-based journals, incorporating a "Sharing Wall" page and finally a central

distribution point for course readings, syllabi, and handouts.

This case study involved two courses at Niagara University: Communicating for Social

Justice (n=35) and two sections of Research Methods [n=15 (x2)]. Within guidelines and with

the professor's approval, the students would build wiki-based, student-generated exams. The

conclusion: "The advantages to applying the principle of user-generated content and

collaborative knowledge building as a learning tool appear to be quite beneficial in terms of

student learning outcomes" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 17). Some of the lessons learned from the case

study according to student responses included (Vygotsky, 2011): The encouragemnt of active

student learning, allowing the students ownership over their course materials, and encouraging

engagement with course material through the collaborative discourse, dialogue, and deliberation

over course concepts.

The use of a social media App is not necessarily a replacement for traditional teaching,

but may actually complement it. The Vygotsky (2011) article over the two case studies stated

that social media is not a replacement for classroom instruction, and "the challenge will be to use

them to complement the intra-classroom experience by adapting these collaborative technologies

to enhance student learning outcomes" (p. 19).

The literature points to several advantages in using social media in the classroom.

Among those, students are more involved in course logistics and it helps create a sense of

ownership among students. Indeed, using social media technology, such as blogs, Wiki, or

social networking, results in collaboration on a larger scale than by using traditional media (Moody, 2010). Furthermore, Palfrey and Gasser (2008) said the use of social media makes for active, communal learning through shared experiences and learning from one another, and thus social media's usage is about pedagogical relevancy and an alternate tool in the classroom learning process. The overall result is less black and white, and more gray lines between so-called traditional classifications of the approach to teaching (LeNoue, Hall & Eighmy, 2011). According to Sadik (2008), within the past decade alone, the advent of all things digital — cameras, phones, editing software, authoring tools, and electronic media — have in essence been an encouragement for teachers to try more approaches and tools than before. This help allows the student-centered learner to construct their own knowledge and ideas to present or share (Standley, 2003). Some of the literature refers to social media being used at a micro-level in the rich generation of user-based content. The concept is that the community (read classroom) as a whole contributes together to shape information. This includes an integration between established learning objectives and student contributions. Therefore, "the body of information that emerges from this collective community of practice is often greater than the sum of its parts" (Vygotsky, 2011, p. 23).

In 2011 Pearson Publishing along with Babson Survey Research Group and Converseon, a social media consultant, surveyed about how higher education faculty use social media. Nearly two-thirds of all faculty responding had used social media in class. The majority of the faculty said social media sites can be valuable tools for collaborative learning, especially the use of video (Moran, Seaman & Tinti-Kane, 2011). The overarching limitations on the use of video on mobile devices for education include: "reduced screen sizes, limited audio visual quality, virtual keyboarding and one-finger data entry, and limited power" (Brett, 2011, p. 29).

Student perceptions of Wiki were analyzed in a single-case observation research design in Malaysia involving English language skills. The study examined the relationship among using Wiki, learning theories, and collaborative writing. The research included thirteen students whose first language was Chinese in Kuala Lumpur in a Wiki writing class creating a science dictionary. "Students showed a very high interest and positive perceptions on the use of Wiki in their class. Post-project student interviews and questionnaires concluded Wiki was a valid tool for collaborative projects in school" (Lian, Hoon, & Abdullah, 2011, p. 121).

Considering the use of social media applications in a classroom setting, coupled with video, points to enhancing student-centered learning and thus widens the focus of the use of App's in learning. The use of mobile phones in education was studied in 2004 using 333 female Japanese university students. When compared against students studying the same materials on paper or the Web, the "students receiving mobile email learned more (p<0.05). 71% of the subjects preferred receiving these lessons on mobile phones rather than PCs. 93% felt this a valuable teaching method" (Thornton & Houser, 2004, p. 8). Current research on the effectiveness of multimedia materials in education point to the positive effect of using video when video anchors instruction and connects it to real-world problems, and when the skills and concepts being learned have a visual component. "The new media environment is therefore more participatory, since communication processes flow in several directions, and since the roles of producer and receiver of information have been scrambled" (Kraidy, 2010, p. 3).

Several other studies surfaced on research involving educational materials delivered by using mobile phones and video: "Ring (2001) accessed distance learning materials on web phones. Other researchers have used mobile phone email, web and voice to study Spanish. The Telenor m-learning Project reviewed training materials on mobile phones outside of face-to-face

training sessions" (Thornton & Houser, 2004, p. 8). New steps in technology for using online and digital video is growing. Al-Jarf (2011) posited "they bring courses alive by allowing learners to use their visual and auditory senses to learn complex concepts and difficult procedures" (Al-Jarf, 2011, p. 99). Lehman, DuFrene, and Lehman (2010) examined the use of a YouTube video project to learn communication ethics:

> Whether students view appropriate video content posted by others or create and post their own, the learning environment is enlivened and made more relevant for today's techno-savvy generation. This classroom project requiring student teams to create an original video depicting communication ethics violations allows students to exhibit critical thinking and creativity while having fun with 'cool' technology. (p. 447)

In another study involving a trade school, younger students were testing a mobile social media App, known as MoViE. While they concluded that it was boring, their biggest complaint was the quality of the video for their projects. What they failed to see was the immediate learning capability of this App, which completed the entire production process in one step, which for student-centered learning purposes, is so much more important than the video quality. Some have argued that incorporating bring-your-own-technology (BYOT) to a classroom setting can be a motivating factor when exploring mobile-learning opportunties (Quillen, 2011). In a study by Bradley, Hanes, Cook, Boyle, and Smith (2010), students surveyed said they preferred to learn on their own mobile devices over those of the institution. This may be an important message for teachers, as they re-think the teacher-centered model, versus a learner-centered one. Herrington and Herrington (2010) posited that "using a learner's own device, ensures that many of the features of the device are well known and practiced" (p. 136).

Summary

The literature supports the notion that the use of theory can, in part, bridge the gap between the scarcity of research available on App's, and the use of this still-evolving learning tool in dealing with a generation of students who are digital natives. Theories seem to revolve around a core of student-centered learning that is widely applicable, regardless of the demography of learners. Constructivist Theory, for example, supports the idea that real learning among the Net Generation of students raised on everything digital, is most likely to occur when the student-centered learner is actively engaged in their education. Therefore, the Constructivist's theory seems to be in support of social media applications being utilized in a collaborative classroom setting.

The importance of learner-centered education has clearly been documented through current research and an extensive review of the literature of theory and the reporting of studies of practices and principles. The inescapable conclusion: less of a teacher-centered learning model in a classroom can lead to more effective learning. Therefore, both theory and literature support that learning takes place best when done within a community, where collaboration and a proactive approach to experiential learning takes place, resulting in a positive learning experience. As outlined in the literature, teachers must assess the pros and cons of this expanding digital world, where social media applications hold a promising future for education, given the digital capabilities of the students in universities today. All of this may increae the student's motivaion to particpate in classroom learning.

"Our amazing, ever-changing technological world may seem overwhelming at times, but educators must rise to the challenge of closing the growing digital divide in education" (Mullen

& Wedwick, 2008, p. 69). It would appear, then, that the literature opens the door for the possibility that student-centered learning holds a key to opening the 21st century door to higher education. "As with any technology, it is not the technology, but the interactions the technology affords that make it a valuable learning tool" (Siegle, 2011, p. 18).

While student-centered learning and social media have been examined in previous research, those have been individualized studies. The literature reveals that the two, using a social media App with student-centered learning, have not previosuly been combined into one empirical case study. Thus the quantity of studies in the learner-centered social media environment are quite scarce. While this may be due in large part to the rapidly evolving and expanding world of digital media/technology and social media, this review of literature, nevertheless, demonstrates the need to determine the impact of combining these two critical learning elements into one study, particularly in the higher education environment.

Collaborative, learner-centered education using social media for "digital natives" has a place in our educational setting; however, further research and study are required. In response to this gap in literature, this researcher worked to discover the role of social media Apps, when combined with student-centered learning, not teacher-centered education while utilizing a traditional classroom setting.

As previously discussed, Vygotsky (1978) held that knowledge was attained by a combination of dialogue and interaction with others. That means knowledge is co-constructed, with the teacher asking far more than telling the student. Thus, the application of Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist theory of student collaboration with more capable colleagues sets the stage nicely for this exploratory case study, decades later, though now focusing on digital education.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to explore the use and implications of a social media App for shooting and editing video when used in a higher education classroom of junior or senior status where video projects are required. In this study, social media was defined as a present day tool advancing the Experiential Theory of Dewey (1948), that for an educational experience to be successful, the learner would need to be actively involved and participating. With IRB approval for this research, 7 participants were selected from junior and senior level (300-400) higher education Studio and Digital Arts classes at a private Southeastern university, where social media was being utilized as a hands-on learning tool. Semi-structured interviews were used with the participants, direct classroom observation by the researcher, and a focus group study with all of the participants following the research.

I, as the researcher, was the sole data collector. The data was collected, analyzed, and interpreted consistent with Creswell's (2007) interpretivist model. For this role, Stake (1995) said "the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized more than the interpretations of those people studied, but the qualitative case researcher tries to preserve the multiple realities…" (p. 12). Stake (1995) adds that it is the interview that is the main path to obtaining multiple realities. Trustworthiness was met through triangulation of data collection and through researcher bias control. Ethical considerations were met through IRB approval before data collection and the use of pseudonyms for the site and participants to ensure confidentiality at all times.

Design

The use of qualitative research in a case study is what researchers use when exploring a problem within a population, where the voices of the participants need to be heard (Creswell, 2007). Stake (1995) stated "we are interested in them for both their uniqueness and commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories" (p. 1). Stake (1995) encouraged researchers to focus on the particular and avoid the general. In that way we can take a particular case and really delve into it to know it well. Creswell (2007) stated, "Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems" (p. 37).

Yin (2009) believed "a research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study" (Yin, 2009, p. 24). Thus this research was conducted in a natural setting where student participants engaged in the issue studied. The researcher was the primary instrument for collecting the data in this single instrumental interpretive qualitative case study, which included classroom observations, one-on-one interviews with participants and a focus group study including interviews with all of the participants in this research on the use of a social media App in the upper-level undergraduate class under study.

The significance of qualitative research is in the gathering of data from multiple sources, known as multi-modal data collection. Then, the data is organized and the researcher looks for emerging pattterns and themes and includes subjective interpretation of interview transcripts from the participants, using the inductive method. This study looked at the importance of the

intersection of social media in a classroom as it relates to learning in higher education among university students. According to Yin (2009), "the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence — documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations — beyond what might be available in a conventional historical study" (p. 11). The approach, as stated by Creswell (2007), provides a framework to follow as an appropriate methodology to discern the experience and feelings of the participants, without allowing this researcher's own experiences in using social media in a classroom setting to influence the outcome of this case study. Instead, this interpretive qualitative case study focused on what Merriam (1988) referred to as discovery and understanding as offered by the participants, who can offer the most meaningful contributions to both knowledge and education. Therefore, this interpretative case study contained what Merriam (1988) posited as rich, thick descriptions, which can be used to create conceptual categories. The participants in this case study thus collaborated with this researcher to, in essence, become the creator of knowledge.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used as a framework for the proposed study:

RQ1 How does the use of a spcial media video App impact student learning in a traditional higher education classroom?

RQ2 What is the impact of a social media video App in the collaborative student-ceneteered learning process?

RQ3   How is experiential learning affected by the use of a video, shooting and editing

App?

Setting

The Fritz University classes in this study were located in central Virginia in the Blue

Ridge Mountains region of the commonwealth. The program at this university for this case

study research implemented curriculum that emphasized experiential learning, and thus uniquely

prepared students with a hands-on education which was critical in their major. This university

provided professors committed to cutting-edge technology, including the exact types of social

media which these students will encounter in the workplace. Experiential learning is the key to

the success of this university's undergraduate classes, such as the one in this case study research.

The total university enrollment for the academic school year 2014-2015, including both

undergraduate and graduate residential programs, totaled nearly 15,000 students. The smaller

class sizes in this technology friendly university made this a unique site for a case study on the

use of social media in a classroom setting. The course major, Studio and Digital Arts, being

utilized in this case study research at this university ranked among one of the highest enrollment

programs on campus, with nearly 350-enrolled majors.

Demographically, this university was not atypical of university enrollment nationwide,

with approximately 52% of the student's being female and 48% male in the undergraduate

program (Fritz University, 2014). The university awards degrees ranging from Bachelor through

Masters to Doctorate, and offers more than 300 academic programs for both undergraduate and

graduate students. Classes in the major where the investigation in this case study research was

conducted averaged enrollment ranging from 5-to-25 students per class. The major used in this

research with this university offered various academic vehicles for using social media outside of

the formal classroom setting. One such resource for students to explore using their social media skills included a university created website called Media Hope, giving students a voice as a counter to popular media in the marketplace. Video projects created in the classes in this case study research utilizing social media Apps are integrated into the website called Media Hope, located at the site of this university research. Overall, this site was chosen for the case study, as it met specifics to "confirm, challenge, or extends a theory" (Yin, 2003, p. 40).

Participants

This study identified junior and senior level undergraduate university students in a class at Fritz University, where a social media application was being utilized in exploring and creating course video projects. Participants were selected purposefully from the upper-level (300-400) university classes that had been chosen to use social media Apps as a tool in the completion of exploratory assignments. The class selected was known to use social media and digital media Apps within the course. The type of course selected was most receptive to doing projects using social media. The demographic mix was purposefully selected to mirror that Studio & Digital Arts major's enrollment gender mix.

This researcher selected seven students for this case study all from one existing class at the university. Thus, this researcher saw far more Caucasian's than African-Americans and a large gap between the female and male gender mix, with a majority of students enrolled in the course being females. As mentioned, the demographic mix, assuming normal enrollment in the course being selected, would be 85% Caucasian and 15% African-American. Further, the gender mix was also unbalanced with a much higher female population. Thusly, the class demographics

represented 75% female and 25% male. The ages of the participants ranged between 19 to 23

years of age. Table 1 offers an overview of the participants in the case study.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants in the Case Study Research

Pseudonym	Grade Level	Age	Gender	Ethnicity
Wayne	Senior	23	Male	Caucasian
Joseph	Senior	23	Male	Caucasian
Megan	Senior	21	Female	Caucasian
Hanna	Senior	21	Female	Asian-Am.
Erica	Senior	20	Female	Caucasian
Cathy	Senior	19	Female	Caucasian
Robert	Senior	25	Male	African-Am.

Participants were selected through purposeful sampling and had to meet several criteria.

First, participants had to not only be familiar with, but conversant in digital media technology.

This included prior experience using traditional video equipment and editing software.

Additionally, the participants had to embrace new digital technology including social media

editing Apps such as the Qwiki, Vines, or Videolicious type formats of social media App

technology. Students in the class being studied completed a Pre-Research Student Survey (see

Appendix A) outlining their individual knowledge and prior use of both traditional and social

media Apps in creating video projects. The participants were selected from a homogenous

sample; that is a sample of students who share the same or quite similar characteristics or traits such as age, background, and major. This ensured all participants were involved in the phenomenon of utilizing a social media App in the creation of video projects for the purpose of the class. In this case, a university professor was used in cross-identifying the participants who were being purposefully selected.

The purposive selection process of the participants, used in qualitative studies, assured the selection of university students engaged in using a specific social media tool in a classroom setting (Creswell, 2013). This process also represented a shift from teacher to student and traditional learning to hands-on learning. This type of experiential learning correlated to the early work of Dewey (1948), and more recently Merriam (1994). "Pedagogy-andragogy represents a continuum ranging from teacher-directed to student-directed learning, and that both approaches are appropriate with children and adults, depending on the situation" (Merriam, 1994, p. 8). In Merriam's work from 20 years ago, the emphasis was shifting to experiential learning, a student-directed form of education. "There is … no point in the philosophy of education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process" (Dewey, 1948, p. 77). Moustakas (1994) said similar studies have researched between a dozen to 15-participants. A much larger range of participants have been used in like research according to Creswell (2007).

Procedures

This research study used a qualitative case study approach in order to capture the voice of junior and senior level university students using a social media App tool in course video

projects, because the student's perspective was the focus of this research. The first stage of

approval was securing permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) with the university

chosen for the research study (see Appendix B). Next, explaining the purpose of the study and

the data collection procedures to the instructor of the class and the leadership of the school for

the class (see Appendix C). Following approval from Fritz University's IRB, participants were

screened and recruited via purposeful email selection (see Appendix D) of all students in the

class. Once selected, the participants were provided instructions and a consent form was

completed (see Appendix E) on the video project, which required the use of a social media App

to complete the assignment.

The researcher began collecting data during the spring 2015 semester. As a part of the

procedure the case study research followed a series of steps. First the class was selected from a

pool of all classes that offer upper-level (300-400) instruction involving the use of applied digital

communication techniques in the School of Communication & Creative Arts. These specific

classes consisted of instruction sets that included the use of digital techniques, including social

media Apps, for the production of persuasive and creative communication messages. The course

accessed for this research was a core, or required course for Digital and Studio Arts majors. The

researcher contacted the instructor(s) through email and sought their participation in this case

study. The email contained a request, agreeing to participate using his/her class, for access to

his/her class, and the names and email addresses of the students in the class. The researcher

provided the instructor with an understanding of the project and shared the research tool in the

form of the interview questions used for student interviews on the experience (see Appendix F &

Appendix G).

The researcher used a purposeful selection process to select the student participants for this case study. As previously outlined, students selected had to be at least 18-years of age and match the qualifications of having previously used a social media App for shooting, editing, or producing a video. The researcher arranged through email correspondence to gain access through the cooperating instructor(s) for an appearance before the class [this included a total of 41 undergraduate students (Course A – 21; Course B – 20)] to begin the research process. The instructor selected for this case study research was a full-time faculty member of Fritz University. The researcher attended the class sessions providing specific direction on the video project explaining how students could select any social media App that offered the capability of creating the video, editing, and producing the video all sans traditional digital media equipment often used in such video projects.

Participation in the social media App research project creation was required by the cooperating course instructor for those students who agreed to be participants. After being introduced to the study, participants were provided an outline from the researcher explaining the intent to collect data, participants were offered informed consent, and assuring the participants that there were no perceived risks to taking part in this study.

The selection was followed by gathering information through one-on-one interviews with each participant to assure their agreement to be included in the study. Assurance was made through each informant that participation in the study was strictly voluntary and that they may stop participation at any time. If a participant decided to stop his/her involvement, the researcher destroyed their data and the information obtained from them was not be included in the study's findings.

Further, the data collection with the participants who consented to be included in this case study, came through classroom and campus observation, several individual student interviews, as well as focus group interviews following the research. It was appropriate to use Moussakas' (1994) approach to secure the voice of these university participants while avoiding any influence tied to the researchers' experiences in media and video projects.

Participant interviews following experiential learning is a key procedure, where adult learners bring their experience to the table, as Dewey's Experiential Learning Theory (1948) predicts, according to Merriam and Caffarella (1999). A Chinese proverb summarizes the learner-centered premise which would be part of the procedure in this case study: "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand." (Confucius, circa 450 BC). During the procedure process of the case study the Constructivist Theory was examined. Under this theory, the learning process must be active and involve the learner directly. "This theory posits that meaning is created by the learner rather than passed down from educator to learner through rote" (Tweedell, 2000, p. 5). Thus the use of social media, as in this case study, provided the communicator either student or teacher, control over construction, negotitation, and interpretation of their identities (Shuter, 2012). Therefore, each of the participants was interviewed about his or her use of a social media App tool following his or her classes. Interviews were conducted in a private setting on campus, but away from the classroom, and thus away from contact with other participants so as not to pollute their individual answers.

Content validity was maintained by seeking five professionals in the academic field to review the informant interview questions prior to implementation. These professors were not selected from any faculty associated with the researcher. Initial IRB approval and collection of data served as a pilot test for this case study ensuring that interview questions sought appropriate

data. Audio recording of the interviews was done, as well as coding tapes with a pseudonym for each student sans any personal information being included, thus protecting anonymity and ensuring confidentiality of the participants. Again, during the research study, the taped interviews were reviewed by the researcher along with the two professionals identified earlier to determine the impact of the social media App tool used in the participants learning environment. Data saturation was met when the participant(s) stopped sharing new information about their experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). All faculty and staff participants who agreed to the study were interviewed in person. The participants' experience information was placed on an Excel spreadsheet. The instructor and the participants were observed in their daily professional roles. The observations of the day-to-day interactions were documented on a Classroom Observational Form and with a Classroom Obeservation Protocol (see Appendices H and I).

The Researcher's Role

Since I am a professional with a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in Communication in the field of the media, and I teach courses specific to shooting and editing video, I had a personal interest in this topic. My experience in creating thousands of traditional video projects, spanning more than three decades, drew me to explore how social media application tools might streamline the learning environment and even more importantly better relate to today's university students, allowing for a student-centered learning experience. Therefore, it would have been quite easy for me to influence the data by including my thoughts, feelings, and even personal experiences. However, my goal was to hear the voices of university students, not my own, so procedures were in place to bracket my own experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

I employed several steps to exclude my experiences from the data gathered in this research. In this qualititative study, I was the human instrument collecting and analyizing the content. I clearly described my personal experiences at the start of this study to set aside those experiences and instead focused only on the participants in this case study (Creswell, 2007). Second, I included member checks, informally checking with each participant after the interviews to guarantee the accuracy of my interpretations (Creswell, 2007). Finally, I engaged the Epoche process as a guide for both interviews and analysis. Moustakas (1994) said, "In the Epoche, we set aside our prejudgments, biases, and preconceived ideas about things" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). My goal was to collect accurate and unbiased information solely from the participants. Thus, the university student participants were the experts and my role was simply as the instrument to share their experiences.

While I brought my personal experiences to this case study, I placed my biases and past experiences aside as the researcher in this study. As the researcher, I was removed several steps from the participants, thus removing any control over the students or the outcome of the research as there was no grading of the assignment. Additionally, while I serve as a professor at Fritz University, the course selected for this case study had no direct relationship to me. The course had been selected in a sequence where I do not teach, nor do I possess any direct knowledge of the specific program or its curriculuar expectations.

The App was researched purely for exploratory purposes in this case study. Furthermore, the evaluation procedure in this study did not assess either the instructor or the purposively selected student's performance in the class as to their use of the social media App. Thus, any bias was removed from this case study as I explored the use of the social media applications in a class.

Data Collection

The results of qualitative research focus primarily on the explanations which emerge from the case study research. Those explanations grow out of the data collected in the qualitative case study. Established qualitative researchers Miles and Huberman (1984) offer that data collection involves four key parameters: the setting, the actors (in this case the student participants), the events researched, and the process. This research project employed a multi-modal approach to data collection including but not limited to: observation as an observer, face-to-face semi-structured one-on-one interviews with the participants using open-ended questions, and a focus group interview with all of the participants following the finished video projects which the students completed using a App. Observation of class(es) included four multi-hour classes during May 2015.

Interviews

This case study research focused the individual participant interviews on the university student participants in the university upper level class using the social media App for their video projects. The interviews were commenced once the researcher received the signed consent forms from each participant. Then, the semi-structured, one-on-one and face-to-face interviews followed the class period(s) for this case study. The face-to-face interviews with specific questions allowed for cross-checking what was observed and heard during the nonparticipant observation. The one-on-one interviews allowed for historical perspective and feelings to be added by the participants to the observed actions of the participants during class. "Interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs" (Yin, 2003, p. 92). This type of question is used to elicit personal accounts of how the

participants both used and perceived the use of non-traditional media for gathering video and editing with the use of a social media smartphone application.

The interviews were recorded using audio and then the interviews were carefully transcribed by the researcher for coding. I also used the services of a professional transcriptionist to assist in the transcribing of the interview quesitons and answers. Participation by the student particpants was voluntary and no incentives were offered to any of the interviewees. The length of the interviews varied from 20 minutes to 35 minutes. A qualititative case study rarely proceeds with each participant being asked the exact same questions, as each has a unique experience to offer. Stake (1995) also stated the purpose behind interviews is "not to get simple yes and no answers but description of an episode, a linkage, an explanation" (p. 65).

Interview questions of the selected individual participants using an App for the video project in this class were conducted in a quiet setting to minimze any distractions. The open-ended interview questions follow:

1. How would you describe the experience of getting to experiment with a social media App for a class project?

2. Explain what previous experience you have with video equipment.

3. In the past 3-months, explain how many times have you used video equipment and in what type of project?

4. What type of experience with non-linear editing software do you have? Please explain.

5. In the past 3-months, how many times have you used non-linear editing software? Explain in what ways you used it.

6. Explain your experience in using any video and editing Apps accessed through a smartphone. Please describe the situation and outcome.

7. Explain why your experience in using a video and editing application on a smartphone was either positive or negative.

8. How has the use of a smartphone application for video and editing been easier or more efficient compared to using traditonal video and editing equipment?

9. How has the use of a smartphone application for video and editing made final production of the product more compatiable with today's digital and social media?

10. In your experience with both traditional video and editing, compared with a video and editing application for a smartphone, what were the advantages in using the smartphone application method over traditional video and editing?

11. How does pre-existing trust in a fellow student familiar with digital equipment, lend more confidence in utilizing a smartphone application to shoot and edit video, versus the use of traditonal video and editing methods?

12. Explain how new media methods for shooting video and editing a project using a smartphone application, would be preferred among "digital natives" due to the low barriers to entry (existing "digital native" knowledge) and the quick diffusion of information?

Additional questions were included which allowed for a continuation of the line of questioning building from previous questions (Wengraf, 2001). As offered by Yin (2003), such

questions in case study research should be more of a guided conversation between researcher and participant and not follow a rigid format.

Yin (1994) also offered excellent insight into asking good questions in a case study. Yin (1994) stated "research is about questions and not necessarily about answers" (p. 70). Another keen point made by Yin (1994) is critical to the success of any interview process; that is, that the interviews must be far more of a guided event and not a formulatic, structured inquiry. In other words, the conversational nature is superior to the formula of asking questions such as one, two, three, etc. All of the individual participant interviews were recorded and transcribed immediately to avoid any confusion. Key to such case study interviews is what Lindlof and Taylor (2011) referred to as active listening, allowing me to track responses and react with further questions as appropriate, based upon the initial participant(s) answers.

Focus Group

The second method of analysis in this intrinsic case study was conducting a focus group by interviewing the seven participants purposefully selected to utilize the social media (App) in the higher education classroom. Focus group interviews with the student participants provided a thick, rich description of the actions of the students as offered while hearing their co-participants respond to questions. Strict confidentiality and anonymity was employed during the focus group interviews, where conversation among participants was encouraged. The purpose of this focus group was to allow all participants to voice their opinions and thoughts on the video project exercise that each had recently completed. The purpose of this focus group was to get the participant's insights into the use of this App as a tool for learning in the classroom.

Much as with the individual interviews, the focus group interview process allowed for information to be obtained in a designated place, away from the natural field setting (Creswell, 1994). "The interview is the main road to multiple realities" (Stake, 1995, p. 64). The focus group interviews allow for cross-checking for those involved in the case study research. Indeed, Stake (1995) posited "each interviewee is expected to have had unique experiences, special stories to tell" (p. 65). Thus, interviewing all participants together in a focus group, allowed for the interaction dynamic to surface which makes for a rich description of the research events and outcomes. For his part, Yin (2009) said interviews offer invaluable insight and provide perceived causal inferences and explanations (p. 102). However, the interviews take place, Yin (2009) cautioned that since these are verbal reports only, their "responses are subject to the common problems if bias, poor recall, and poor or inaccurate articulation" (p. 108-109). Some of the interview questions used in the Focus Group Interview process were as follows:

1. What is the single characteristic that stood out for you in the use of this social media App?

2. Did you find you learned more or less? Please explain.

3. Why do you think what you did in this assignment will stick with you…or not?

4. How important is student-centered learning, where you guide your own education?

5. How did the social media App engage you in student-centered learning?

6. How would you recommend using a social media App such as you did in this class? In future classes?

Observations

As indicated, this researcher conducted the observation of the class and case study research as an observer and a nonparticipant, though observation occured during the time students were engaged in utilizing and learning through their student-centered, collaborative usage of a social media App during class. Participant observation would have brought the researcher too close to the subject matter and thus potentially impact ethical considerations. Hughes (1971) said that a person who is of the culture, but not part of it, often makes a good observer. As a nonparticipant, this researcher thus concentrated solely on the observation process. The observation included the use of fieldnotes and the observers record of observations. These included taking notes on as much verbatim conversation as possible by the participants, as well as notes regarding the context of the conversation in the student-centered learning process. Attention was paid to possible saturation when observations ceased to add much new information to previous observation. Another aspect of the observation process included memoing, for tracking comments, inferences, and judgments by the observer.

Miles and Huberman (1984) said that memoing is critical as we often forget to think when we act as observers. The research followed established researchers such as Creswell (2007) as well as Yin (1994 & 2009) and Stake (1995) using constructivist research of a social media App in a university classroom setting, where student-centered learning in a collaborative setting is occurring. A Case Study Protocol (CSP) was utilized in this research. This provided a set of guidelines to be used to structure and govern a case study research project (Yin, 1994). Further, according to Yin (1994), this ensures uniformity in data collection and then analysis (Yin, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Stake (1995) referred to this observation phase in the research as "incontestable description," to be analyzed and reported. "He or she lets the

occasion tell its story, the situation, the problem, resolution or irresolution of the problem"

(Stake, 1995, p. 62). Stake (1995) clearly saw this type of case study research, by obeservation,

as a means to giving the reader a sense of being there. Stake (1995) posited "the physical space

is fundamental to meanings for most researchers and most readers" (p. 63).

Data Analysis

An interesting starting point is how Tesch (1990) put it, that the process of data analysis

is eclectic and there is no right or wrong way to handle it. While data collection and data

analysis can be done separately, Merriam (1988), as well as Marshall and Rossman (1989),

believed they should be done simultaneously. Therefore qualitative data analysis involves

classifying things, persons, events, and the elements that encompass them. Jacob (1987) said a

case study researcher should index or code their data using as many categories as possible.

Tesch (1990) called this process "de-contextualization." The data analysis in this intrinsic

research project included open coding, where the researcher picked 5-10 listings and then

divided answers by categories as themes surfaced, looking for specific statements being repeated.

To code and manage large amounts of narrative text as was anticipated in the qualitative

interviews in this research, codes and categories were established using software such as

HyperQual, Atlas.ti, HyperRESEARCH, or NVivo. Thus, this researcher entered field data,

interview data, observations, and researcher's memos, and then tagged or coded all or a portion

of the source data.

To create a coding method, researchers are encouraged to make a list of all topics, list

similar topics, create columns such as major topics, unique topics, and leftovers. Once the list is

created, abbreviate the topics as codes and include those next to all pertinent text from

observations, interviews etc. Once the topics have been listed using descriptive words, convert these into categories. Then reduce further by grouping all topics that relate to each other. It is also suggested the researcher color code categories on transcripts. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) (as cited in Creswell 1994) suggested topical areas such as:

    a. Setting and context codes

    b. Perspectives held by subjects

    c. Subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects

    d. Process codes

    e. Activity codes

    f. Strategy codes

    g. Relationships and social structure codes

All of this leads to what Miles and Huberman (1984) outlined as the investigative process where the researcher makes sense of the case study by contrasting, comparing, replicating, or classifying the object of the study. Thus, to put the evidence in this case study into some preliminary order, Yin (2009) pointed to Miles and Huberman (1994), who suggested summarizing as follows (p. 129):

    a. Putting information into different arrays

    b. Making a matrix of categories and placing evidence within such categories

    c. Creating data displays — flowcharts and other graphics — for examining the data

    d. Tabulating the frequency of different events

    e. Exmaining the complexity of such tablutions and their relationships by calculating second-order numbers such as means and variances

    f.   Putting information in chronological order using some other termporal scheme

Stake (1995) said "for most important data, it will be useful to use preestablished codes but to go through the data separately looking for new ones" (p. 79). As evidenced from the data collection using the multi-modal approach, more than one source of information was included in the research findings. Marshall and Rossman (1989) stated that the qualitative analysis will be based on reduction and interpretation, thus reducing data to patterns, categories, or themes. These categories or codes create the story to be told by this researcher in the case study. Miles and Huberman (1984) encourage displaying the information in a spatial format. Coding of the data provided a lens through which the data could be viewed in a relational structure. The sum of this intrinsic case study research was about "trying to pull it apart and put it back together again more meaningfully" (Stake, 1995, p. 75). This led the researcher to focus on a process that tried to break down the observations into discrete sets of behaviors that could be reassembled around unifying themes and sub-themes.

Trustworthiness

Credibility

Credibility is concerned with the extent and accuracy to which the findings describe reality. Credibility is established based in part on how rich the information gathered is and also on how well the researcher is able to analyize the results. In short, this is about confidence in the truth of the findings in the research study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) offer seven methods for assuring credibility including: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member-checking. Considering the first two methods, Lincoln and Guba (1985) posited "If the purpose of prolonged engagement is

to render the inquirer open to the multiple influences — the mutual shapers and contextual

factors — that impinge upon the phenomenon being studied, the purpose of persistent

observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant

to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail. If prolonged engagement

provides scope, persistent observation provides depth" (p. 304).

Another method where credibility can be secured is through triangulation. This

involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding. Some

see triangulation as a method for corroborating findings and as a test for validity. Rather than

seeing triangulation as a method for validation or verification, qualitative researchers generally

use this technique to ensure that an account is rich, robust, comprehensive, and well-developed.

Among the reason to triangulate in a research project, a single method can never adequately

shed light on a phenomenon. Using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper understanding.

Denzin (1978), as well as Patton (1999), identified various types of triangulation, one of those

germane to this case study is analyst triangulation — using multiple analyst to review findings

or using multiple observers and analysts. This can provide a check on perception and

illuminate blind spots in any analysis. The goal is not to secure consensus, but to understand

multiple ways of seeing the same data. The researcher did that in this case study, using an

outside expert review panel to view the finished video projects.

One other way in which credibility is established is through member checks. This was

determined according to its effect on instruction and active learning in the learner-centered

model that was tested in this case study research. Therefore, two methods were utilized: member

checking and transcription. In the member checking, it allowed for reviewing both the data and

the students' interpretations in the case study research including checking participant response.

The purpose was to minimize the distance between the researcher and the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1988). Member checking included taking the categories or themes established through coding, back to the participants to ask whether the conclusions were accurate. Member checks also involved the participants verifying the accuracy of the transcripts from the one-on-one interviews with each informant. As Stake (1995) offered, in a case study the participants must "play a major role directing as well as acting in case study research" (p. 115).

Dependability

Dependability in qualitiative research is the eqivalent of reliability in quantitative research. Research is deemed dependable when it meets consistency, which is often seen through the context and the setting of the study. A way of looking at this is showing that the findings are consistent and could actually be repeated. One method for addressing dependability is through external audits, which involve having a researcher not involved in the research process, examine both the process and product of the research study. The purpose is to evaluate the accuracy and evaluate whether or not the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by the data. This method was utilized by the researcher in this case study, in the form of the expert review panel, judging the video projects created by the student groups. External audits provide an opportunity for an outsider to challenge the process and/or the findings of a research study (Miles, & Huberman, 1994).

Transferability

Transferability is another important part of the qualitiative research study. This focuses on the possibility that what is found in one context or study, is likely applicable to another context or study. One of the methods for assuring this is through thick descriptions, described by

Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a way of achieving a type of external validity. By describing a

phenomenon in detail, one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are

transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people. The term thick descriptions was first

used by Ryle (1949), and later by Geertz (1973) who applied it in ethnography. Thick

description refers to the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes clear

the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context (Holloway, 1997). This

is contrasted with thin description, which is just a superficial account of events and experiences.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the part of the research studies where a degree of neutrality or the extent to

which the findings of a study are shaped by the participants or respondents and not controlled by

the researcher's bias, motivation, or interest. Several methods may be used to sustain

confirmability, including: an audit, an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity. Triangulation, as

stated, involves using multiple data sources in investigation, to produce a better understanding of

the research. Some see triangulation as a way to corroborate the research findings and to test for

validity. The controversy surrounding this makes the assumption that a weakness in one method

will be compensated for by another method. Rather than seeing triangulation as a method for

validation or verification, qualitative researchers generally use this technique to ensure that an

account is rich, robust, comprehensive, and well-developed. One reason for the argument to

triangulate, includes the position that a single method can never adequately shed light on a

phenomenon. Therefore, using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper understanding.

Reflexivity is another method by which confirmability can be met. This is the attitude of

attending systematically to the way in which knowledge is constructed, especially for the

researcher, at every step of the research process. Indeed, "a researcher's background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions" (Malterud, 2001, p. 483-484). Examining beliefs about research bias, there is an assumption among researchers that bias in a research study is undesirable. As Malterud (2001) wrote, "Preconceptions are not the same as bias, unless the researcher fails to mention them" (p. 484). While some may see these different ways of knowing as a reliability problem, others feel that these different ways of seeing provide a richer, more developed understanding of complex phenomena (Koch & Harrington, 1998).

To summarize the trustworthiness of this research, six methods were implemented by the researcher to address what Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed as establishing quality criteria such as trustworthiness. Those methods included bracketing, member checks, peer or expert review, prolonged engagement (observation), reflexivity, and triangulation. Thus, observation, memoing, participant interviews, and focus group interviews all increase credibility for the study. Trustworthiness hinges on the main purpose of this qualitative case study, which according to Creswell (1998) and Merriam (1985), is to provide an in-depth description of the events, for the case study. Researchers can agree that replication of the events in a case study are quite difficult to achieve. In this qualitative case study, great effort was made to provide sufficient information so that others might replicate this case study. As posited by Yin (2009), such efforts serve to minimize any bias or simple errors in the research methods.

To increase confirmability of this study, clear records were kept and all researcher notes preserved. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referenced that these notes provide an audit trail for checks and balances. Indeed to clarify, Lincoln and Guba (1985) said the audit trail is "a residue of

records stemming from inquiry" (p. 319). This is to be judged according to its effect on instruction and active learning as displayed in the learner-centered model, which is at the foundation of this case study research. How readily does this research match similar case study research on social media and its role in active learning in a classroom setting?

Bracketing

Bracketing was used to check validity and predominantly to ensure, as much as possibile in such research, that my interpretations of interviews and observations were not changed by the my experience and background in video production (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1985). As I approached the interviews I wrote what I believed to know about the participant's partnership experience in the student teams and, more over, how I expected them to respond. Thus, I was bracketing my thoughts ahead of the actual project implementation. This provided me as the researcher, the ability to remove my own preconceived opinions or experience with this phenomenon (video projects) and instead simply focus on the voice of each case study participant (Moustakes, 1994). As the interviews were taking place I was also writing down brief thoughts. These included primarily the observation of both the seven participants verbal and non-verbal responses to the questions. In some case I could see a variance from what I had observeed and heard as the students interacted with other gorup members. In most cases the two matched, in a few instances I could see what was being said during the interview being a slight adjustment from what was observed. I was also noting how comfortable the participants appeared, which went more to the heart of the energy, passion, and excitement of using the App to learn in a classroom setting. Following each interview, I made additional notes, especially targeting any surprises that were divergent from both my pre-interview and interview notes. As stated, I used memoing during this process, writing down ideas about the exploration during the

process. I used horizontalization to evaluate the data being collected, which provided for a

"equalness" to each element and statement. The data was then gathered and sorted into broader

statements and then placed into groupings by meaning.

Member-Checks

Additionally, member checking was accomplished through transcription which was

critical to the trustworthiness of this case study. The veracity of the participants was crucial to

the validity of this case study. As previosuly addressed, member-checking included participants

being asked to verify the accuracy of the transcription for the interviews done with each student.

The transciption process begins with either the researcher transcribing or utilizing a student at a

local university. This should include detailed instructions, should a student be assisting in

transcription. Indeed, I transcribed one interview with the graduate student to ensure accuracy

and inclusion of all pertinent content. It seems critical that all verbal and non-verbal responses

be recorded when transcribing (Seidman, 2006).

Peer Review

This research employed peer review to see how the case study research applied to

instruction and active learning. This peer review consisted of a designated faculty colleague

and/or a graduate assistant student not working for this researcher, reviewing the data collected,

the transcriptions of informant interviews and the coding of the data. Peer review also took place

in the form of the Video Review Panel (see Appendix K) assembled by the researcher to observe

and grade the projects using a rubric. This neutral group of reviewers, experienced in social and

digital media, offered yet another layer of trustworthiness.

Prolonged Observation

In a case study research project, observing the participants in their natural environment for an extended period of time offers an additional level of trustworthiness. In this research, the students were first observed in the original classroom as they were given project instructions. Then students were moved into groups by the professor and again their interactions, dialogue with fellow classmates and actions were observed by this researcher. As the groups moved into shooting and creating their group video projects with the App, they moved around the campus. Again the researcher was observing the groups during these extended video production shoots. Finally, observation took place in both the individual and focus group interviews, where the researcher gathered further content for this case study.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is another method that was used by the researcher for assuring trustworthiness through the researcher being the primary instrument for data collection and through the asking of questions, by the researcher, to clarify the results being observed. According to Merriam (1988), the internal validity or the accuracy of the information and whether it matches reality, is integral to credible qualitative research.

Triangulation

Finally, triangulation was utilized by the researcher to assure more than one method of data collection was used, thus assuring that bias did not enter into the research from any one source or method of research. Yin (2009) referred to this as gaining a broader picture of the phenomenon being studied. While there are different methods of triangulation, using mutiple sources of data as was being done in this case study (observation, participant interviews, and

focus group interviews) protected the information being gathered as accurate. The use of multiple sources is called "converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation and corroboration" (Yin, 2009, p. 115). Also, as previously stated, the use of bracketing by this researcher helped to clarify any bias and thus brought validity to the study. Additionally, abundant use of direct quotes by the participants were used in this case study, providing clarity for the voice of the participants. Triangulation is based on the assumption that any bias inherent in any data source, investigator, or method, would be neutralized when exposed to other data sources (Creswell, 2007).

This qualitative case study research checked to determine if it shows application for future action or research. This hinged on how well this case study could be replicated as it applies to instruction and the experiential learner-centered active learning. In other words, how transferable is it? This researcher believes that the data collection steps offered in this case study, and the efforts attempted at reliability, do not exactly replicate the study, though they do minimize both error and bias (Yin, 2009). The use of thick descriptions, which is the phenomenon each participant experienced, allows a reader to check the ability of this case study to be transferred to another setting. Thus, Stake (1995) said "a description is rich if it provides abundant interconnected details" (p. 49).

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, appropriate ethical practices must be the benchmark when conducting research. Thus, Kouzes and Posner (2007) said this modeling is about an earned right and respect to lead by being directly involved and taking action. Self-reflection was important throughout this research so that as a researcher my worldview or perspective did not spill over

onto the participants. The process began by taking steps to gain permission from both the university department and the IRB to conduct the research. Merriam (1998) posits three main ethical issues to address, which include: maintaining confidentialiy of the data, protecting the identity of the participants, and using the research for the reason intended. All data gathered will be kept locked in a cabinet for three years following the conclusion of the research. To protect both the university and the participants, pseudonyms were assigned to both the university and the students in the case study research.

Further, a complete explanation of the case study was discussed in detail with each participant who signed the consent form. As stated, both the academic site and the participants were assigned pseudonyms. All interviews once transcribed, then were shared with each participant as a member check on accuracy of all content. All documents related to this case study are being kept in locked cabinets in my home. All computer files connected with this case study are password protected.

Summary

The purpose for conducting this research was to explore the use and implications of a social media App for shooting and editing video. A higher education Studio and Digital Arts class at a private Southeastern university was selected. The researcher was the primary instrument for collecting the data in this single instrumental, qualitative case study. Students in the class being studied completed a survey outlining their individual knowledge and prior use of both traditional and social media Apps in creating video projects. As a part of the procedure, the case study research followed these steps: the researcher arranged through email correspondence to gain access through the cooperating instructor, for an appearance before the class of the seven

undergraduate students to begin the research process; after being introduced to the study, participants were provided an outline from the researcher explaining the intent to collect data, participants were offered informed consent, and assurance given to the participants that there was no perceived risk to taking part in this study; the data collection with the participants who consented to be included in this case study came through observation, several individual student interviews, as well as focus group interviews following the research.

Audio recording of the interviews was done, as well as coding tapes with a pseudonym for each student sans any personal information being included, thus protecting anonymity and ensuring confidentiality of the participants. The instructor and the participants were observed in their daily professional roles. The observations of the day-to-day interactions were documented on an Classroom Observational Form and a Classroom Obeservation Protocol Form. I included member checks, informally checking with each participant after the interviews to guarantee the accuracy of my interpretations (Creswell, 2007). As the researcher, I was not grading this assignmment; indeed, there was no grading of the assignment in this course by the professor as well. The social media App was being researched purely for exploratory purposes in a case study. The data analysis in this research project included open coding, where the researcher picked 5-10 listings and then divided answers by categories as themes surfaced, looking for specific statements being repeated. Five methods were implemented to address what Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed as establishing quality criteria such as trustworthiness. Those methods included bracketing, member checks, peer review, reflexivity and triangulation.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to explore the use and implications of a social media App for shooting and editing video, when used in a higher education classroom (300-400 level) where video projects are required. More specifically, to examine how the use of a student-centered social media App — in place of more traditional video and editing instruction — in a collaborative university class, affected academic interest and achievement in a traditional classroom setting, with special emphasis on utilizing experiential, student-centered, project-based learning.

Researching the use of social media video App, the researcher sought to answer the how and why questions within the real life context of the classroom setting. The case study is the preferred qualitative method of research when "the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 2003, p. 1).

A purposeful sampling of participants came from a Mid-Atlantic university in Virginia. This research study provided an in-depth description and analysis of student-centered learning, using experiential and constructivism as the learning based theories. The case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence-documents, artifacts, and interviews. Thus, the detailed findings from the interviews, both individual and focus group questions, as well as document analysis, and surveys, are presented in this chapter. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

RQ1 How does the use of a spcial media video App impact student learning in a traditional higher education classroom?

RQ2   What is the impact of a social media video App in the collaborative student-

ceneteered learning process?

RQ3   How is experiential learning affected by the use of a video, shooting and editing

App?

The remainder of this chapter will address the case study research participants, first

addressing as a group and then each individual participant. Then the results of the study will be

examined, including the pre-research student survey that each participant was given. The results

from the video projects completed in this case study are examined through the eyes of the video

review panel formed for this research. Also, each of the research questions will be looked at

including interactive student learning, collaboration, and experiential learning by the student

participants in this student-centered learning exploratory research project.

Participants

The focus of the case study pertained to the use of a social media video App in a

classroom, to create a student-centered video project, in a project-based and collaborative

environment. It is important, though, to first know the profile of those students and their

groupings for the videos created.

The average age of the seven participants was 22-years-old. The youngest was a female

(Cathy) at 19-years-old and the oldest was a 25-year-old African-American male (Robert). The

majority of the seven students were females, at 57% with 43% of participants male. The three

males in the group of participants accounted for the highest average age, at 24-years-old. The

four females in the sample size averaged just 20-years-old. All seven participants in the research

were seniors, yet the graduation periods greatly varied. Two students will graduate this

academic year 2015. Four students will graduate at the end of the next academic year 2016. The final student will not graduate until the 2017 academic year. The students were assigned to teams by the course instructor sans any knowledge or influence by this researcher. The three males, Robert, Wayne, and Joseph, were assigned to the project-based team # 3. The female students were assigned into groups of two; Megan and Hanna were assigned to project-based team # 2, and, finally, students Erica and Cathy were assigned to the project-based team # 1.

Participant Profiles

All these students, ranging from 19-25-years-old from the summer intensive — a multi-week shortened semester in Graphic Design I — are currently ranked as seniors. Five of the seven participants have been in the same instructor's classes before, ranging from just one up to 4 courses before this Graphic Design I course for the case study research.

Cathy. Recently transferred into the graphics design program, from previously being a business major at the same university. According to her graphic design professors, she is excellent at this craft and is a quick-study when it comes to grasping new assignments. Cathy's father happens to be on the faculty of the business department at the same university. So Cathy may be one of the least experienced in this major coming from a business and not digital media background, as well as being the youngest student among those who participated in the case study.

Erica. This student happened to be the second youngest among the case study participants and one of four female student participants. She too, like Cathy, is new to the graphic design major. She also happens to bring a second skill set to the case study — she has a studio art background. Her instructor said that this coupled with her having a very good

understanding of the graphics tools required in her program major, makes her uniquely qualified to work in a student-centered environment.

Hanna. This student is a marketing major at the university where the research was completed. This made her unique among the other student participants, in that she coupled graphic skills with the sales side of the video project work completed in the case study. Hanna has enough classes and credits for a graphics minor. She is considered one of the more talented and diligent among the participants, according to her course instructor. She also happens to work full-time for the marketing department at the university where the case study was conducted. Her older sister graduated from the same Studio and Digital Arts department as Hanna.

Joseph. He is considered one of the most serious and diligent students among those participating in the research project, according to the course instructor. Joseph is not only graphically talent but brought a very advanced technical background to the research project. Joseph has an older brother in the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program at the same university where this research was conducted. Joseph had also taken this same course earlier in the summer and returned to take it a second time, specifically to work on the video project component.

Megan. This student has been in the graphic design program in Studio and Digital Arts, but has not been in this instructor's courses for over a year. Her instructor states that her work began as very "immature" and therefore, she did not bring a great deal of graphic skills to the table, though the instructor says that her work has certainly matured. She is considered talented and can easily grasp new material from graphics to design to technology associated with it.

Robert. He brought a unique perspective to the course and the case study, which is that of attending this university from abroad. Robert is majoring in graphic design in the Studio and Digital Arts field and is from the Bahamas. He is considered by his instructor as very reasonable and a friendly student — who also happens to be quite talented in all things visual. He was possibly the most skilled of all of the participants in this class for the case study. Robert is experienced in video and photography.

Wayne. The final student participant in this qualitative case study research was classified by the instructor as the most "irregular" among his students in this course. Wayne is, however, considered very talented, has a good technical background which played well in the case study, and tried to do innovative work. Said another way, he was to work far outside the usual boundaries that the rest of the participants worked under.

Table 1, as seen on page 69 and listed again below for reference, contains background information for each of the corresponding students who voluntarily took part in this case study research. Pseudonyms were established to protect the identity of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants in the Case Study Research

Pseudonym	Grade Level	Age	Gender	Ethnicity
Wayne	Senior	23	Male	Caucasian
Joseph	Senior	23	Male	Caucasian
Megan	Senior	21	Female	Caucasian

Hanna	Senior	21	Female	Asian-Am.
Erica	Senior	20	Female	Caucasian
Cathy	Senior	19	Female	Caucasian
Robert	Senior	25	Male	African-Am.

Themes

These themes provided unity for the interpretation, explanation, and discussion of the results from this case study research. All of the themes underlined the benefits derived from the use of video Apps in a classroom, and the perceived enhancement of the learning experience. In addition, the themes neatly correlated with the resulting investigation of the individual research questions. All of these themes have two sub-thematic dimensions, a personal and a digital. The first involves the relationship of the individual learner with other individuals, and the last with the technology. The following themes and sub-thematic dimensions focus on the research questions which were used to guide the reporting and later discussion of the findings of this qualitative case study using a social media App to create a video project.

Three themes emerged from the data based on observations, interviews, questionnaires, and viewing of relevant videos. These themes paralleled the research questions, forming a set of uniform threads present throughout each of the data collection methodologies. This allowed horizontal linkages of results across the research questions, creating a picture of the findings that allowed the individual research questions to yield a collective set of findings that offers a foundation for later discussion. The overarching theme flowing through the data was that of benefits; that is, that participants received unique benefits from the instructional approach under examination. The following themes — all based on benefits — supported and enhanced both the research questions and insight into the data sets of the effect of video apps on learning:

Benefit Theme One: Encouraged Interactive Learning among students

Benefit Theme Two: Engaged Collaborative Learning in the student groups

Benefit Theme Three: Utilized Experiential Learning with the student's experiences

These themes provided unity for delineating the benefits for the interpretation, explanation, and discussion of the results from this case study research. All of the themes underlined the benefits derived from the use of video apps in a classroom, and the perceived enhancement of the learning experience. In addition, the themes neatly correlated with the resulting investigation of the individual research questions. The themes and sub-thematic dimensions focused on the research questions which were used to guide the reporting and later discussion of the findings of this qualitative case study using a social media App to create a video project.

First, it is important to set the scene for this exploratory case study. The initial classroom setting for this research was held in a large classroom (see Table 2) with movable chairs and tables. The case study participants chose where they would assemble in their groups to begin their video projects. The three men, Joseph, Robert and Wayne working as a team in Group 3, sat closest to the front of the classroom along the right side when looking from the podium. Group 2, with Megan and Hanna, selected the opposite side at the front of the room. Then the Group 1 ladies, Erica and Cathy, moved to the back of the room to work on their video project.

Table 2

Demoss 2199
Overhead Map
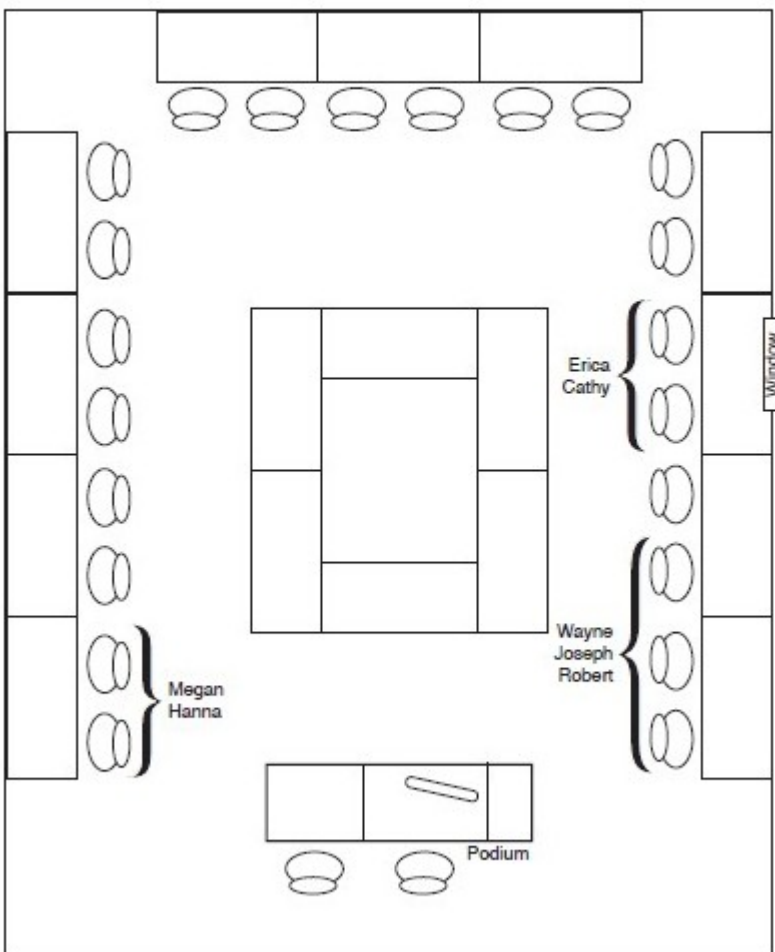
This was important as the first theme which emerged was one of interactive learning. The

mobility factor played a key role in the students being able to assemble in their groups, a distance

from the others, thus establishing their ability to interact independently. There was only one

instructor and the researcher presenting the research project.

The student-centered nature of this course was quite evident as displayed by the

instructor. He was very hands-off and encouraged the small class to "work and think outside the

box on their video projects." His mantra was that he would be available to address questions

after the researcher presented the project parameters, though otherwise "they were free to

approach the project as they believed was best." The class was offered as a summer intensive course, meaning it met for just 4-weeks, immediately after the Spring-15 semester at the university had ended.

The general feel of this class was quite laid back, somewhat unstructured, respectful of the projects at hand, and totally engaged in the process. There was a sense of excitement and, because it was a summer class populated primarily by students about to graduate, the motivation to succeed and be focused was quite high. Once the students were given the project, somewhat surprisingly but very encouragingly, the students broke into their groups and immediately started working in their teams. There were no interruptions, though students in this class were given a fair amount of latitude to come and go as needed for breaks. The environment, as Erica expressed, was "a great way to learn by interacting and collaborating with my classmates." The participants asked very few logistical questions of the researcher as they launched their video projects. There seemed to be a sense of certainty, none expressed doubts that they could accomplish this task and a genuine excitement seemed evident by the format offered. In essence, the students appeared to have clearly grasped the expectations for the research project and thus, the participants became empowered to make their own decisions regarding the project (see Appendix L).

Encouraged Interactive Learning

This first theme involved participants in the research who were encouraged into a back-and-forth, both conversationally and in problem-solving, to complete their group projects. The participants benefitted from the encouragement to engage in interaction that helped them frame, understand, and creatively address the challenges posed by the researcher for the tasks

surrounding use of the App. This engagement manifested itself on two levels, sub-themes that provided unity to the two directions of interactive benefits: Personal Interactive Learning, in which engagement involves face-to-face interaction with other members of the group, and Digital Interactive Learning, in which engagement takes the form of addressing the tasks posed by the case and use of the App through an iterative process with electronic media. The benefit from this theme and attendant sub-themes was clear, that of more involvement and generation of ideas and relevant content solutions.

Personal Interactive Learning

Students embraced not just the use of the App, but the resulting opportunity to interact on a personal level with others in the course during the group assignments. It was an eye-opener to almost all of the participants in this case study. The use of social and interactive technology fostered considerable interaction between and among the members of the groups. All of the participants agreed: the need to talk, to discuss, to collaboratively create both strategy and tactics forced upon them more back-and-forth with others. In addition, this increase in task-related interaction promoted an increase in social interaction, in which relationships were affected.

"I got to know so many others in this class!" was the way that Robert described the experiential opportunity. He noted that the relationships fostered by the App were layered, providing an understanding of others at multiple levels, underlining the very essence of personal interaction. It is not that the assignment surrounding the App required that interaction; it is just, Robert said, that to create strategy "we had to" learn more about where "everyone was coming from." The student use of the App revealed the multiple dimensions and, often, benefits of the use of a social-based digital App in the classroom. Unlike a traditional classroom, which focuses

on acquiring a knowledge and/or skill set, the results of the students using the App indicated another dimension in which relationship management became equally, if not more important than, an understanding of the features and use of the App characteristics relative to the assignment.

Participants in this case study expressed a strong connection with the interactivity, largely focused on their intensified relationships with others in the class, both students and the instructor. A group comprised of two females, Megan and Hanna, both commented on how much more targeted and useful their interaction with the instructor was as a result of the App. This, they said, was due to their increased need of the expertise of the instructor in order to create a strategy and thereafter populate that strategy with appropriate tactics. As Megan put it, "I had to bounce a number of ideas off of him — and he was funny with some of his answers." In other words, the use of the App resulted in personal interaction of the sort that led to a greater appreciation of the humanity of the instructor, and a better understanding of his expertise on the issues related to the project at hand. The App use and surrounding project of an App-centered approach to learning, increased the experience of the classroom as a place to enter into and encourage relationship with others. "Now that I know our teacher better," admitted one girl, "I'm more likely to approach him on other issues regarding the class." "I really enjoyed the App…" commented Wayne, who then went on to express satisfaction with "not just sitting in class having a teacher lecture on" the subject, but getting "my hands dirty." It became apparent that students learning with this particular technology used human-rich interaction in selecting the content of the project and then created a total learning experience which involved both personal and task-related interaction. This, in turn, promoted greater satisfaction for interaction, as another student, Hanna, expressed there "was nothing I was negative about." From Erica,

"You're learning how to use stuff and learning about others at the same time. I really enjoyed this project…"

It was evident in the repeated comments about what another male described as a "whole student experience" that there was a consensus that the project for the week motivated students to work both for and with each other, to build relationships that are both horizontal and vertical in nature. This opinion, echoed by all of the participants, showed a greater enjoyment of the establishment of academic autonomy, with groups and individuals performing a self-regulating function around the use of the App. The benefit, according to the students, is that individuals who actively participate in their learning through self-directed digital means are more independent, decisive, and informed in their choices. Thus, students are confidently interacting at a personal level, a situation introduced through the use of a digital App in the classrom, and manipulated through the sets of interactions and relationships surrounding the App.

Consequently, students not only actively participated in their learning, they also enjoyed the classroom experience more — in large part due to the positive experience of establishing more intensive relationships with classmates and even the instructor as indicated by a number of participants. One student remarked that the lessons were not only "self-taught," but they were more involving because they involved "more personality" by both the instructor and other members of the class. A number of students commented on the texture of the relationships, seeing a change from a "flat" two-dimensional interaction with other members of the class to a multi-dimensional relationship, with knowledge and skills being conveyed through a textured and involving range of emotions, psychological connection, and a "whole lotta' friendship."

It became evident that a key part of these findings was the embrace of a learn-by-doing approach to education by the participants, with the doing sandwiched in a series of involved interactive relationships. While doing is by definition interactive, this study pointed to the richness of that activity as including a growing intensity of affect, and usually centering around "liking" others. "Really, for the first time, I liked (my instructor)," one female said. She was quick to point out, however, that it was not that she "didn't like" him in the week previous to the exercise; it was "just that he was a teacher, but now we're working together, truly being interactive." The introduction of the App promoted a more human and personal view of both instructor and student, hence highlighting the value of relationship-building through the personal interactive dimension involved in using the App.

Interactivity emerges in a learning situation when students make the leap from relative passivity to interactivity with resources, classmates, and/or instructors. The findings in this case study show the shift of students, as a result of using Apps, from the passive, teacher-centered approach to learning, to the interactive side of the learning continuum, student-centered and interactive approach to learning. At the same time, from the uninvolved to the affective side of classroom relationships, the result was to not only increase the sheer number of interactions with the material, the classmates, and often the instructor as they work with an App-based assignment, but to lift the morale of the individual students, the video project groups, and the class overall as students developed affective links to each other and the instructor. The response from case study participant Erica supports this and aptly summarizes the increased interactivity, "Explaining the App to someone else, facing challenges helped me know both the App and the people that much better."

It is instructive that these findings so intimately link an instructional technique to the face-to-face interactions both inside and outside the classroom, and to a significant observed increase in feelings of well-being among the participants in this study. The word so often used by participants was "like." "I like this," said Hanna; "I like my group," said Megan; and the instructor, according to Joseph, "is likable, I discovered." It is significant to note that all the approaches to observation and understanding of the participants pointed to the increased affective involvement of today's "digital natives," pointing to a significant difference when compared to traditional teaching and learning styles.

The results emphasized that traditional teaching and learning, while valuable in some defined areas, do not involve students in invested learning and problem-solving to the extent that a more non-traditional and digital technique does. The non-traditional and digital based approach, in this study, resulted in greater interaction and a general increase in satisfaction with the classroom experience. Ironically, as another student Robert pointed out, the use of this technique and impact of the greater personal interaction caused the student to anticipate the end-of-course surveys so that he could "encourage professors to do more of this."

Digital Interactive Learning

The thematic results of the involvement of the participants with the technology itself in this sub-thematic area demonstrate, again, the significant increase in regard for the tools used in the classroom when a more non-traditional teaching and learning model is used. A key result of this study, emerging as a theme from the results of the research into this first question, shows that a more relevant digital approach that focuses on independent, group-oriented, new technologies produces a variety of increased interactions and — as one student, Cathy, pointed

out half in wonder "I'm even liking the technology — I don't always feel that way." Although a digital native and personal user of all things App and mobile, she explained that she did not come from a technology background. Hanna also still did not have a level of comfort with digital featured use much beyond texting, game-playing, and picture-taking. However, she considered the cross-pollination of an App used in such a way in the classroom that it encouraged both greater personal relationship — important to today's digital native — and more in-depth and effective use of technology. "(My group) was rewarded for exploring," she said, noting the increase in engagement brought about by the assignment used in this project. Although inexperienced at using a mobile App for this type of project — only one out of the seven participants in the study had at least a year of experience — this student, by the end of the week, became a champion of video App use and Erica said her intent to "use it in my other classes!"

To fully understand the extent of that statement, consider what participant Robert said about how many students today can teach themselves before they begin to tackle an assignment, as they did in this case study research — regardless of their experience with the technology. He noted that individual students can "work through the App" once the project is underway and they have been introduced to it. The students took it upon themselves to increase their familiarity with the technology, watching YouTube videos explaining the tools and techniques at their disposal in the assignment, all the while attempting to do what the instructional videos showed. In other words, the increased give-and-take with the digital technology they were using on their smartphones. At the same time, this digital interaction served to increase their confidence. Although most had not had experience with the technology, and most were not accustomed to using it for problem-solving in a classroom setting, the consensus was a reported increase in confidence in their ability to tackle the same problems that they would later face in their chosen

lines of work. Now "I understand the lighting techniques and different assignments I might get" when he joins an organization after graduation, was the way participant Joseph put it.

The participants, in various ways, indicated that the week of interaction with the technology served to increase their confidence in themselves, and provided outcomes that not only allowed for more effective delivery of a specific product, but served to enhance participant self-esteem, regardless of level of expertise and familiarity with the technology. Every stage of this study reinforced the digital-interaction-as-confidence-enhancer observation. In the individual participant interviews, for example, each of the seven students in this case study was given a Pre-Research Student Survey.

The eight questions in this survey were meant as markers ahead of the exploratory case study research, to check the participant's position on a number of issues related to experiential learning, student-centered learning, project-based learning, collaboration, and the degree to which each participant considered themselves "digital natives." The results were evident: although most students portrayed themselves as having beeen raised with all things digital, they had differing relationships with the technology for learning purposes and were largely a bit unsure of themselves in this area. However, the results of this survey revealed a benchmark of knowledge ahead of using the social media App in this case study of Studio Arts and Design students that, when put together with the observed experiences of the participants over the course of the week, showed a marked increase in confidence, regardless of where the student began on the beginner/expert in technology continuum.

The overview of this survey showed the vast majority of these seven participants (72%) had no experience or less than 6-months of experience in creating any sort of a video project.

However, the App combined with a professed understanding on the part of the students that classmates were to be engaged and involved throughout the project — as Robert commented, the "most natural thing in the world, talking with my group about how to do this, I love it" — resulted in data for the first research question clearly grouping into an interactivity theme, with deep confidence-enhancement dimensions. For clarification purposes, that engagement included both traditional video equipment used to create a video project, or the use of any social media App in the creation of a video, as would be the focus of this exploratory case study research.

One student (14%) of the seven participants in this study had between 6-months and one year of experience in creating a video. Just one other student (14%) had more that one year of experience in creating a video of some sort. Clearly this one student was the exception in terms of video experience to the group of participants in this case study. Regardless, even this student, Robert, later noted, while emphasizing "my expertise," conceded that the result of the week in this non-traditional setting was "so much more confidence and creativity in what I'm doing."

Another telling statistic from the Pre-Research Student Survey hinged on students being asked if they had ever considered using a social media video App to create a video project on a smartphone or a tablet. Five of the seven students in this survey (71%) said no, they had not considered such a method for creation of a video. The remaining two students (29%) said yes, they had at least considered using social media video App for making a video project. The student participants in this case study were also asked in the survey to rate their attitude toward using a social media video App for creating a video project. The majority (5) of the seven students in the case study (71%) had either a very positive or somewhat positive attitude toward the use of an App for creating a video. The remaining two students (29%) rated their attitude as neutral for the possible use of a social media App to create a video. An integral part of this

positive attitude was the expectation that its use would result in more social contact and back-and-forth in the classroom. At the same time, their experience with Apps both within and outside the classroom provided them with a foundational expectation of interactivity and increasing realization that there are, as Joseph put it, "so many things we can do with this."

One final question from the student survey of the participants in this case study dealt with the student's attitude toward using a social-media video App where specifically student-centered learning and collaboration with classmates — all of which, consequently, is seen under the theme of interactivity — is the primary method of instruction. For clarification, students were advised in this survey that the term "primary method" did not preclude any instructor involvement, however it was intended to test how comfortable — and consequently positive — participants would be when working in collaboration and centering their education on the experiential side of learning. Again, the individual- and team-guided interactions with the digital technology led to a significant increase in participant confidence and ability to use the technology. In subsequent interviews, the theme of increasing confidence and building a variety of digital tools and techniques in their personal repetoire recurred consistently across all interviews and experience levels.

The results, from beginning to end, were very consistent. Again, the majority of the seven students surveyed (57%) stated they were either very positive or somewhat positive about that prospect of student-centered learning and collaboration when focused on a project-based learning outcome. Two of the seven students in the survey (29%) rated their attitude toward student-centered learning and collaboration as neutral. The one remaining student (14%) of the seven surveyed rated his or her attitude as somewhat negative toward the use of a smartphone or tablet App in the creation of a video project in which they interacted with others. However, as

the project developed and participation became more involved, the consensus was that the Apps represented opportunity for increased digital application intelligence, and a greater variety of technology tools that could be employed in later situations after graduation. In other words, student confidence in themselves and their mastery of the tools increased with exposure and interaction with the software.

Table 3

Pre-Research Student Survey examines experience, use, and attitude toward using an App

_____

Question #3	Never created a video project	Less than six months	Six months to one year	More than a year of experience
Length of experience in creating a video project:	(3-students) (43%)	(2-students) (29%)	(1-student) (14%)	(1-student) (14%)

Question #5	Yes	No
Have you ever considered using a social media video application (App) to create a video project on a smartphone or a tablet?	(2-students) 29%	(5-students) 71%

Question #7	Very positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative
Rate your attitude toward using a social media video application (App) for creating a video project:	(1 - student) 14%	(4 - students) 57%	(2 - students) 29%	0	0

Question #8	Very positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative

Rate your attitude toward using a social media video application (App) where student-centered learning and collaboration with classmates is the primary method of instruction:	(1 - student) 14%	(3-students) 43%	(2-students) 29%	(1 - student) 14%	0

The findings clearly indicate that the use of a social media App in student learning, the focus of the first research question, are linked and strengthened by the theme that correlates with the findings of this investigatory slice, that of interactivity. Interaction with the technology on a digital level, and with others on a personal level, promoted a greater confidence in the tools and techniques used by these digital natives, and led to an increase in professed self-esteem: "I didn't think I could to it," said Megan, "but I could and I did and I can do it again someday!" It is clear, based on the observations, that interactivity was a unifying theme for describing the seven participants and their widely positive increase in affect regarding both the use of the technology in their digital interactions, and their ability to create and sustain relationships based on their face-to-face interaction. It is important to note this survey was taken by a small number of students and not intended to be a sample or to generalize specifically, but to understand how these students looked at the use of an App in a classroom setting with student-centered learning.

Engaged Collaborative Learning

This second theme was where participants in the research experienced enhanced and cooperative engagement as they collaborated in the completion of their group projects. Indeed, the engaged and collaborative benefit was probably the strongest theme to emerge from the research data. The students truly embraced this, demonstrating just how easily they can work in project-based, constructivist models for learning. All of the study respondents actively engaged

others in the creative process resulting from use of the App. Erica clearly stated, "Collaboration, I think, like, working with people is always helpful." This second theme stresses the enthusiasm with which these participants greeted the media App and its effects of drawing them into conversation and work with others. Once again Erica spoke of her group and collaborative learning saying, "Like, if you don't know how to use something, like, you can both kind of figure it out, or, all figure it out together." In this regard, the theme of Collaborative Learning was integral to the flow and nature of the classroom work once the App was introduced in this case study and the desirability for interactivity with both the tasks and other individuals became evident to the participants. Collaborative learning proved to be a benefit that channeled the previous Interactive Learning into group engagement, promoting increased levels of cooperation along the sub-themes of Personal Collaborative Learning and Digital Collaborative Learning. These two more focused sub-thematic benefits promoted joint creative solutions to the challenges posed by the app-based assignment.

Personal Collaborative Learning

Another one of the participants, Robert furthered this theme of Collaborative Learning by addressing the personal side of his experience in this research project:

> I would, um, especially when it comes down to video and, um, certain arts projects, it's important to be able to collaborate because that's how certain assignments get done. Um, if you're not able to collaborate, or no one's willing to, then certain levels of expectation can't be achieved, at least it won't be achieved in a proper manner without people, like, trying to pull out their hair and

screaming to the top of their lungs (laughs), because of frustration. Um, so, I-I-I

do personally like the collaborative aspects.

Not only did Hanna concur with what the other students stated about collaborating on this video project, but also she brought a unique and critical component to the research findings — real-world insight from her current job — which supported this method of learning. Hanna expressed, "I think it prepares you more for the workplace." She added, "I work over in marketing, and so the way that they handle their projects and, umm, just collaborating with each other I thought this was really good experience. It kind of lines up with what I've seen in marketing." Hanna confirms what almost all of the other participants in the study alluded to at various times during the research, to succeed in the "real-world" we must be able to cooperate, collaborate, and be part of a team. Gone are the days of an independent employee working in a vacuum, especially when it comes to the digital images, video, and production required in today's media world, where these students hope to land after graduation. When talking about collaborating with other people, Hanna was clear this was a positive experience and a great test for the world outside college, stating, "I thought it was a good, umm, way to learn." Cathy piggybacked on that idea, adding, "When you get, like, in the real world, when you get a job, you have to work with others, I learned that through personal experience." Robert chimed in saying, "I don't own the ideas, but I had better be willing to collaborate and this App project confirmed that for me."

The participants in the case study research, as previously stated, were each given a Pre-Research Student Survey. One of the final questions asked what their attitude was toward using a video App in a student-centered learning environment where collaboration in groups or teams was the primary method of learning and thus integral to the learning technique. Clearly the

majority, 57% of the participants, surveyed *before working together*, had either a very positive or positive attitude toward collaborating on a project-based classroom assignment. In other words, the research question measuring the impact was linked by the response of these students to the overriding theme linked to this research question. These findings were also verified during the case study research.

The student participants in the case study research, were the strongest and most detailed in responding to the questions regarding collaboration, as related to a student-centered, project-based learning experience. One of the three males in the class, Joseph, expressed real value in using collaborative learning along with the social media App in creating the video project, especially as students collaborated on the video projects. "I might go off track on an idea, and someone in my group could bring me back. Well, we need to focus on this." Again, the recurring finding linked to this single theme, collaborative learning. Joseph follows-up offering how collaborative learning hinges on peer learning, "it kind of enables you to be, in some ways, your peers are teaching you, and you're teaching them, and you're kind of doing it all together."

Cathy, one of four females participating in the research creating the video projects, was most excited about her team's collaborative efforts, because she, like many of the students, links success in this type of project-based learning as a vital step to success in the field of digital design. Cathy explained it this way: "I learned the hard way, like, you have to be able to work in a team, and work with others, and be able to compromise, and listen to their ideas. So, I think it's a good — it's a good thing, cuz it gives you that skill, um, of team work."

The oldest of the seven student participants, Robert was torn in his response. He expressed what the literature review found, that learning is enhanced when students can

collaborate on a project-based lesson. The finding of more collaboration was, in that sense, predictable; so too, was the flip side. On the other hand, Robert expressed being conflicted as well, when weighing traditional teacher-centered learning versus student-centered learning. Here is how Robert put it:

> Just like, last year I had another project-based learning, uh, assignment. I learned so much from the people in my group. Cuz it helps you to grow as a person. It's difficult in the sense that, your professor knows more, whereas, your student, like your peers, they can understand how to explain it to you better.

The findings support the notion that the impact of the use of social Apps promotes increased collaboration. For example, another of the female participants, Cathy, focused her responses on the real-world as well, and what the job market expects, which includes team work. She found the project-based learning opportunity with an App, is a good fit for life after college and the need to be able to work with others as part of both formal and informal project teams. Cathy stated, "You must be able to compromise, and listen to their ideas, which is exactly what we did in this video project, listen to each other."

The particpants in this research study pointed to three areas where they, as digital natives, believe there is an increased vlaue to collaborative learning, those being blogs, Wiki's, and all forms of social networking. Again, it is worthwhile to note that the findings from this research — and especially this second research front — corroborate much of what previous researchers in this area both found and speculated.

Three remaining student participants in the case study, Erica, Megan, and Wayne, all offered strong support for collaboration in a student-centered environment. Wayne's input was

"I think learning the way that we did and working with another student was really interesting." Megan pointed to the value of more eyes and hands on a project, "You might be working on a project that, umm, you need different thoughts on. Umm, so I would still say positive." Erica offered that she enjoyed the App process of using this to learn and create a project in a group setting, by collaborating. "I thought it was a good, umm, way to learn." Educators have long felt that involving students in the learning process, in this case through collaborative means, is most successful with students. The participants in this case study research expressed their comfort with the freedom associated with the learner-centered, project-based method of education, as they began work on their video projects.

As for collaboration and the second research question impact, the three final questions as included in the Observation Protocol Form (Appendix C) for this case study may have yielded the most insight into the mindset of these seven participants as they began their video projects. The first question hinged on "Did the students engage in making decisions?" The next question was "Are students engaged in discussing expectations of these video projects?" The final question in this sequence asked "Are the students engaged in problem solving?" In the observation of these case study participants, this researcher found a great deal of decision making on the part of the students on these projects. One such example was Wayne, who said, "I decided to teach myself how to use this video App for the project."

The interviews, both individually in a one-on-one setting and for the focus group interview, produced rich, thick descriptions of the student-centered, project-based learning this researcher observed in this case study. In short, this linked the impact of social App use to collaboration and engagement with others. What follows below are some of the exchanges and groupthink that proved so important to hear. Joseph's response in the focus group zeros in on the

critical element in this research, that being how important today's college students deem experience and student-centered learning that follows along a collaborative track.

Another example of this is where the findings gathered during another phase of the research, showing the striking impact of engagement promoted through collaboration. During the focus group interview, the participants were asked to rate the importance and the value in student-centered, project-based learning through collaboration. Students were asked on a scale of one to five, with five being student-centered learning is the *best method* to learn, and one being the *least desirable* method, where would each of them would rank student-centered learning. Hanna and Megan both said on a scale of 1-5 they would rank it at four. Among the students, Wayne was the most supportive of student-centered learning in this project, ranking at 4.8 on a scale of one to five. Erica and Joseph placed it on the scale at a three to four, with Joseph stating:

> Yeah, I mean I would say four or three. I wouldn't want it to be totally, you know, like total freeform. I think you have to find a balance in there somewhere. But, probably, maybe, leaning to student-centered learning.

However, Cathy tempered that view further. She stated that "student-learning has its advantages, but I think, like, there's something about just not always just doing things — doing cool things, doing fun things — but just, like, learning from someone who has, like, a lot of experience." While the participants in this research were all very positive about the value of student-centered learning, they were unanimous in their desire to have a blend of some instruction and some hands-on or experiential learning, especially through collaboration.

It is almost as if the findings of this research and the conclusions of decades of research into this area are one and the same: value for student learning in collaboration in the classroom environment.

Digital Collaborative Learning

What the participants in the case study did to interact in a collaborative way on their video projects was clearly an important component of this study. How they collaborated using the App on the digital side of this brings a critical dimension to the learning process in this research. One of the participants, Joseph, explained how his group worked their way through the App for their video:

> We were able to talk about things, and I might go off track on an idea, and someone in my group could bring me back and say, well, we need to focus on this and I would be able to do the same thing with our group. And then, the other thing too, is, you know, as we're working through the App, you know, I, all of us kind of watched the tutorials separately, so we were talking about it, umm, and, you know, so we were trying to edit the video, and so we were working at it, and were like, well, how do you do that? And I was going to say, well, you go over here, and you do this. So, for me, explaining the app to someone else helped me know it that much better. Um, so, it kind of enables you to be, in some ways, your peers are teaching you, and you're teaching them, and you're kind of doing it all together.

Regarding the question of whether students discussed expectations for the video projects — a critical component of collaboration — Robert spoke to this as the projects began and this researcher observed and heard him say that they could get outside video, but as he cautioned the

others in the group that is not what this project is about. Robert was referring to the students

being responsible to create their own video, not accessing pre-existing video from a second

source. Yet another example representative of the students engaging in problem solving came in

this exchange among Group 3 members, Robert, Wayne, and Joseph, in that order respectively:

1. Robert- "Yes, how do we work the App?"

2. Wayne- "We need to see how we can split the audio."

3. Joseph- "We also need to figure out how to stabilize our shots." (when using the video App)

4. Robert- "The App is easier first coming into it, but my prior knowledge of Premier (Adobe editing software) might have helped."

5. Joseph- "You can upload video to use and share on the App site. So we can send it to our account and work together on a group project such as this."

One of the four females in the class, Hanna, described how her group worked through their video

project by collaborating. However, the real value for her came in the real-world experience she

was gaining by working in this video project with the App in a team. Hanna stated:

So we were trying to edit the video, and so we were working at it, and were like, well,

how do you do that? I think it prepares you more for the workplace, umm, just when,

like collaborating with other people. I work over in Marketing, and so the way that they

handle their projects and, umm, just collaborating with each other I thought this was

really good experience.

After this first day observing the students in their classroom, the three groups of students then

started moving to various locations on campus to create their individual videos projects, but all in

groups. The focus group interviews took place on the final day of the four days spent with these students in this case study. But this time each had already offered individual feedback on the learning process while using the video App and had worked on their video projects to near completion. When asked if there was a value to using a video App in a classroom to learn, the response was overwhelmingly in favor of it. Hanna described it as offering a chance to use a different creative outlet.

The majority (57%) of the student participants in this case study research — Joseph, Robert, Megan, and Hanna — correlated the importance of studying the use of a video App in a classroom to the real-world expectations that they believe exist once they leave college. That is, that they will be able to engage others in job-related tasks. They specifically addressed what they referred to as "learning to teach yourself" through give-and-take with others. This was stated best by Joseph, one of the graphic design students in the research study. He said people get a job and go in, while employers say they need to do this and they are just thrown into it; so the sooner people can get out of their comfort zones and learn to teach themselves (working with others), the better off they are. Megan added that people broaden their knowledge that way.

Emerging from the focus group interviews related to the use of the video App in the case study, the research participants said a lot of graphic designers have told them that this technology is what everybody wants. One added, workers may not use their phones, but the same principles and concepts still apply. Thus, the focus group offered valuable insight into collaboration with a social media App. Two of the particpants in this case study; Robert and Joseph, had this learning exchange as described by Robert during the research process:

I wish I could do this inside the App, and then Joseph was like, you can do it. And I was

like, I tried all this time, like in the App, and I couldn't figure it out. And he was like,

Oh, you just do this and this, and I was like, Oh my gosh.

The conclusion of the focus group interview brought a telling exchange between two of the seven participants in this case study research, Joseph and Hanna. These students discussed how vital they felt hands-on experience was to their success as job seekers. They used the parallel of the social media App used in this research, which allowed them through project-based learning, to take an experiential and constructivist approach. Joseph even suggested that it was similar to an apprenticeship before entering the workplace. He said when people leave college they know things, but don't really know anything. Most of all they lack experience. He likened the first job to an apprenticeship and said using an App and student-centered learning in a class, helps to fill that void before a job. Hanna sees an employer as telling her what to do along with some information and experiential knowledge and then she says people learn as they go, much as was done in the research project.

This then led to the expressed need on the part of students to consider the opinions and suggestions of others, encouraging a collaborative approach that then had a considerable impact on the video results of the assignment. The students worked together to fit their final products into the parameters of the structure set by the researcher. As a result of all of this, the students naturally evolved — as evidenced by the interviews and observations — into an expressed realization that the entire process was a slice of the actual working world outside college brought into the classroom.

Utilized Experiential Learning

This third benefit theme resulted from enhanced experience of a learning process that, based on the explanations from and observations of the participants, resulted in a greater feeling of having engaged successfully in a set of tasks — experiential by definition. Megan highlighted the added emphasis on the utility encouraged by this theme, saying "we each brought our unique perspective, experience to these projects. In some cases we taught each other based upon that experiential background." Experiential learning proved to be a benefit that channeled the interactive and collaborative natures of the benefits accruing from the use of the Apps-based approach into hands-on engagement. This then promoted increased levels of competency and creativity, channeled through the sub-themes of Personal Experiential Learning and Digital Experiential Learning. These two more focused sub-thematic benefits, encouraged learning expressly tied to the ability of participants to perform similar tasks outside the classroom; that is, build and engaged skills that have a greater chance of being transferable to outside occupations.

Personal Experiential Learning

The students in this case study overwhelming embraced the role of experiential learning, which uniquely positions them to learn in different ways, all related to work outside the academic learning environment. As one of the seven students in this case study and right in the mid-range among ages, Hanna echoed what all of the participants in this case study said about the level of experience each brings to the learning arena. Here is how Hanna put it:

> In the end, our video came out a little bit better because it wasn't solely focused on one
>
> person, and their ideas, and, it kind of, um, especially for creative projects you can really
>
> hold on to your own idea, and how you see, you know, this resulting in the end, and the

end product, and stuff, and so working with somebody else, helps you let go of your

original idea, which is better because you always need to let go of that because it's not,

um, because if you hold on to that, then, you end up with something that might not be as

good as it could be. So, having the other person there to say, "Hey, this is a better idea,"

um, especially with a creative project like a video, and with the App, umm, was a lot

better for me, I think, so. Making the video itself, again, um working with a partner she

would have ideas that worked better than mine, or I would have ideas that worked better

than hers.

Hanna was not unique in her response to bringing a wealth of prior experience in all things

digital and technology, and her view that this brought her closer to the work being performed on

a daily basis in the marketplace in which she ventured that she would be seeking employment.

Wayne mirrors Hanna's point about experience as coming from being known as a "digital

native," which correlates with the prior studies found by this researcher. Wayne stated:

I would put myself in that category. Um, I guess more generations now-a-days are doing

everything we can with App's… um, so it's getting a higher percentage, in college and

high school, to do that.

The first question from the established Observation Protocol to be considered was "Describe the

instruction by the teacher establishing a student-centered learning environment." Examining the

course instructor's message to the participants, the students were encouraged to think about how

a project-based, learner-centered environment might change how they learned in his class.

Another question on the observation protocol was to describe the student's relationship with

fellow classmates in this process.

As the students began their group projects, this researcher witnessed an extraordinary amount of nearly immediate collaboration drawing upon an experiential baseline which helped the students to negotiate meaning and the actions they would take on their group video projects. Several examples of this include the following comments or exchanges among the group members:

Group-1

1. Erica- "I have been through the tutorials, they are easy to use."
2. Cathy- "You can only have one audio (track)."
3. Cathy- "I didn't think it was hard to use the App. I think anyone can learn it."
4. Cathy- "I did not use the App. tutorials, I am gonna figure it out on how to add the audio."

Group-2

1. Megan- "We'll use one phone (our iPhones) to shoot the video."
2. Megan- "No talking will be used in the video, just a clean video, no interviews."

Group-3

1. Joseph- "I looked at the App, it is user friendly."
2. Joseph- "It (App) was a little confusing at first, but it makes sense."
3. Wayne- "It was easy for me and I am not into video stuff."

Along that same line, another observation protocol question was framed around how the student's discussed their course of action on this video project, and what amount of actual experimentation they engaged in involving the use of the social media video App.

Digital Experiential Learning

The findings in this chapter provide evidence that the participants viewed the role of the video App in their learning process as a multi-factor set of scales — each scale following a theme and sub-theme — that increased in intensity and affect as immersion in this learning approach increased. This particular sub-theme emerges strongly from the vocal and oft-repeated expressions of approval for an App-based learning approach. It allowed the participants, over the course of the week, to experience "real" work (as opposed to "classroom" activity, the more traditional and somewhat stereotypical approach).

The students expressed strong appreciation and support for a digital learning experience that they perceived mirrored the experience required by potential employers and other organizations in the field that they eventually saw themselves working: "This is great," commented Cathy. "I'm laying down an audio track, having to figure it out just like I'll need to later." She and the other student in her two person group said they appreciated the "real life" experience of the class. "We expected hands-on" because it was a class in an applied area of the communication and digital arts field, but "we're just so happy that it relates completely to everything outside." They appreciated the care that they perceived was brought to bear in the selection of the App and the accompanying project instructions, all of which they saw as a critical link for them to the outside world. In other words, these student participants in this case study admitted that they have been looking beyond college and trying to grasp the skills that matter in the workplace, not just the classroom. The explosion of technology and the widespread use of App's is a part of that landscape.

"You've given us something that you know is being used," was how Wayne put it. Erica added, "You've made sure we'll be working with the kind of stuff we have to learn out there." And another student, Cathy, said, "This is great, we're not just working with digital tools, but we're working in the way we would be when we go outside!" This was in reaction to the background given in conjunction with the course instructor, advising the students that they would be asked to create a short (:30-:60 second) marketing/promotional video, which would mirror the approach taken in the professional world. "Real thing," "real world," "real stuff," "real life" — repeatedly, time and again the students were excited by the "real" use of the digital tools and techniques that were part of a potential on-the-job digital experience.

Hence, the development of this sub-theme: Digital Experiential Learning. An additional factor in the positive impression was the use of the digital App in a small group, the foundation for comments like this from Hanna: "it's just the way I had worked in my job last semester," and "this is how my dad does it." No lectures for them; they would, instead, as the instructor of the class noted, "be working on the real thing" (private communication to researcher by instructor, May 25, 2015).

With the students now established in three separate groups in their class, they were totally focused on this aspect of the experiential learning in a real environment. Indeed, pairing this question with how students worked proactively with each other, using the social media App in the classroom, this researcher observed each of the three groups asking each other questions. The groups of students was tapping into their own experiences pre-class and applying what they had discussed with each other while in class. They considered options for how to proceed and how to use the App. The groups were seen testing their assumptions on their capability to complete the task of creating a video project with a social-media application— and continually

relating it to their own growth as the week progressed. This digital experiential learning was with the tools and techniques that organizations, both for-profit and non-profit, are using.

This sub-theme was echoed by the panel of experts on video production and operations, each of whom brought their expertise to bear on evaluating the work product. This review panel of four individuals, three males and one female, were selected for their working knowledge of video projects — in evaluating the videos, they had a number of comments about the "approximation" of the project to what they had each done professionally. Again, this provided an invaluable link to the actual experience that the students could expect once they left the classroom. Table 4 below, provides a snapshot of the make-up, experience and background of the video review panel. It is significant that the panel members outlined, in their evaluations, the real-world nature of the production output of the students. One member of the panel put it best: "They're working as if it's real, we're evaluating just the way their future supervisors would look at their work." Again, a return to the sub-theme of a connection to experiencing, through the learning process, the digital App's widespread in the field to which the students were aspiring.

Table 4

Video Project Review Panel

Name:	Gender:	Position:	Experience:
Chris	Male	Professor-Strategic Communication	35-years
Dawn	Female	Social Media Coordinator	5-years

| Jack | Male | Media Lab Director | 10-years |
| Jeremy | Male | Professor/Producer-Video Production | 12-years |

The evaluation team, based on the summary provided in Table 4 used assessments that were pulled from actual evaluative tools used in performance reviews for workers engaged in activities similar to the class. Judging the students on production techniques, aesthetics, audio/lighting, video, and timing was deliberate in that the researcher wanted to bring the same techniques that employers would use in assessing performance into the classroom. The students appreciated that, regardless of the outcome of the assessments. "I can make my mistakes now," was how Joseph put it. Another student, Erica, noted that "it's a lot easier to make mistakes in the classroom — nothing is at stake!" This was especially true in this case study, as no grading of the project for the actual final course grade was applied to these video projects. Their experience in this digital project was steeped in the experiential sub theme discussed, but with absolutely no negative cause applied to the students. Thus they were free to experiment, and learn from the experience without consequence.

This research was purely exploratory in nature and did not in any way impact the course judgment by the instructor for the seven students in the study. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees, it was evident that the applied experience with the digital technology in this case study allowed participants to — in a sense — "try on" work. This had the effect of involving digital operations before the student participants had the added pressure of having to produce satisfactory work in a much more competitive environment in the marketplace. Though not graded, it is quite interesting that the video review panel felt the students performed above

average on their group video projects. That is a tribute to the experience each brought to the

table, understanding that none of them had used a video App to create a similar project before

entering this class for the case study.

Table 5

ARTS 352 Video Projects Rubric Compilation

_____

Advanced = 4 points, Competent = 3 points, Developing = 2 points, Beginner = 1 point

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Overall Production	2.00	3.25	1.50
Aesthetics	2.25	3.00	2.00
Audio & Lighting	1.75	3.50	1.50
Video	1.75	2.50	2.00
Timing	3.00	2.00	1.00
TOTAL Score	2.15	3.56	2.00

A summation of the Table 5 results reveals the following conclusions:

1) Group 2 (Megan & Hanna) was deemed the best Overall Production and best

   total score, with a 3.56/4.00 score.

2) Group 1 (Erica & Cathy) was scored as the second best Overall Production

   and total score, with a 2.15/4.00 score.

3) Group 3 (Wayne, Joseph and Robert) scored the lowest in both Overall

   Production and total score, with a 2.00/4.00 score.

4) Group 2 also hit the single highest score on any one category, with a 3.50 in

   Audio & Lighting.

Which groups produced the best scores? In a sense, it does not matter, as the unanimous verdict of the participants was that just the act of experiencing this type of project made all of them "winners." In fact, one individual, Robert, in Group 3 put it this way: "We're learning, man, we're learning, that's what's best." And two other members of the group emphasized the added value brought to the classroom by what Joseph and Wayne termed "professional expectations on professional equipment." In other words, they viewed the App used in the research as professional in nature and thereby valuable; whether or not the App was actually a professional tool used in the strategic communications of an organization was, by this standard, irrelevant. What matters is the perception of the students of having engaged in a week of professional experience, while in a college classroom and picking up expertise with the digital tools that are becoming so widespread in a variety of industries and consumer marketing sectors of the economy.

The evaluative narratives provided by the video review panel add another layer of understanding to this case study research and the potential value of a social media video App being used as a project-based tool in education. Interestingly, while the video review panel judged each group project independent of the other reviewers, the results are quite uniform, with similar descriptions in the message. Even the video review panel, like the students, linked the classroom project results to their understanding of the video work being done by professional organizations in the marketplace.

One of the first findings by the professional review panel, for example, was the professional need for each group to vary their shots. A need for shot stability was another conclusion by all four reviewers. The third theme that all of the review panel members focused on was the quality, or a lack thereof. Their quotes shared the same message with different

approaches, such as "not broadcast worthy" or "above average for beginners." This all was related to the "'outside" world, the professional world of production, marketing, and operations that this team of reviewers had experience in — and, by nature of the assignment, formulated their expectations for the students based upon the inclusion of their product in that world. The reviewers appeared to be benchmarking these case study video projects against traditional, professional grade products they see. In addition, these millennial, digital natives voiced approval of bringing professional standards into the classroom, and experiencing and using the technology in a manner similar to what they perceive as that used by professionals.

It cannot be emphasized enough: the nature of the App based video project, produced a hands-on experience; the hands-on experience gave the students a perception that they were doing the next best thing to competing in "the real world," is how participant Cathy put it. It also provided a type of instant gratification, as they not only were learning in a classroom setting, but they were instantly getting the experience they needed on the job — so they said repeatedly. In this, they were more favorably disposed toward the instructor and the course. In fact, Erica said she felt like the instructor made it easy, and that the "App was helpful, fast, and easy to use and easily accessible, especially for novice video App users." Another of the seven students, Megan said she was convinced the instructor was making a point by agreeing to allow the App to be tested in class. Her point as that the instructor wanted the students to know how powerful experiential learning could be in a student-centered learning environment.

Their desire to want "it all and now," as Wayne said in discussing the potential for his career, corresponded with the hands-on approach to the technology and the need to quickly learn through the projects what they would need to know for the marketplace.

Summary

This qualitative case study research explored the use of a social media video App as a classroom tool for project-based learning was carried out in four equally important steps. First through classroom observation of the students, as well as observing students in a variety of campus locations as students were working on their video projects. Next in two separate interviews with each student, including both the one-on-one interviews followed by the focus group interview with all seven students at once. Then the use of a Pre-Research Student Survey for each participant, and finally through document (archive) analysis of the video projects by third party video experts.

The recurring themes present within the Pre-Research Student Surveys and carried through with the observation both inside and outside the classroom, in the individual participant interviews, the focus group interviews, the video project review panel scoring, and the review panel narratives, all proved consistent and uniform. These themes were three in number, and focused on the benefits derived from learning associated with themes arising from the research questions and can be described as (1) Interactive Learning, (2) Collaborative Learning, and (3) Experiential Learning. These themes assist in separating the analyses based on the three research questions into a coherent and overarching theme running through the interpretation of the results.

All of these benefit-based themes proved to be useful in channeling the learning responses of participants into engagement approaches that synergistically affected participant learning in a positive way, increasing competency, creativity, and generating more solution sets than a typical and traditional learning approach. In addition, the sub-thematic benefits, by

grouping into personal and digital channels that cut through each thematic area, promoted a more unified approach both among and between the task groups.

The students offered in their pre-research surveys how they favored the use of a social media video App to create a video project — its simplicity and activity as a learning tool a key benefit for them. In rating their attitude toward using a social media App, 71% responded that they were either very positive or somewhat positive toward the use of the App. The Pre-Research Student Survey was equally as telling when the participants were asked what their attitude was toward student-centered learning and collaborating with classmates to learn how to use the video App. In this case they rated themselves at 57%, as either very positive or somewhat positive about student-centered learning and collaboration on a video project in class. In the first case, asking about the participant's attitude toward using a media App for creating a video project, all of the remaining students, 29%, rated themselves as neutral toward the idea. Which means there was no resistance to using the App in class. In the second question about student-centered learning and collaboration, again 29% of the students surveyed said they were neutral to the idea of working together in student-centered project-based learning. Thus 86% of the participants headed into the case study with no negative opinions about the concept being researched.

Emerging from the case study was an apparent uniformity among the methods used to evaluate this case study, all ultimately revolving around the over-arching benefit theme. The pre-research survey supported what the post video project interviews revealed, both individually and in the focus group, which was a generally favorable opinion by students to using a video App in a project-based learning environment. The observations by the researcher supports that collaborative spirit and interest in the video application option, both in the classroom experience

and around campus as the student groups created their video projects. The one apparent

difference came from the video review panel, where the general conclusion favored stronger

video quality and a more professional (read standard video collection process) final product.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMMENDATIONS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate a proactive, experiential, and student-centered, project-based approach to learning. This exploratory research was focused on the effects of a social-media, video App being used to shoot and edit a video project in a traditional higher-education classroom setting. A case study approach provides a stronger analysis of the type of interactions taking place while taking into account the perceptions of the researcher, a video review panel judging the video projects, and the students. Through this review, in one class with three (3) separate groups of students assigned to create an individual video project, a clear analysis of both techniques and reactions by both the students and the review panel could be seen.

The results of this study confirm the strength of a digital-based and experiential approach, with student engagement enhanced by the use of a social-and-digital-based App used as the foundation of a project-based approach in the classroom. At its essence, project-based learning is focused on learning through one's experiences (Solomon, 2003). Within the learning domain, Thompson and Beak (2007) point to project-based learning as a way to involve students in course materials, for a "learn-by-doing" approach. Indeed, research shows that involving students in the learning process is most successful with students engaged in implementing active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Meyers & Jones, 1993). Using project-based learning and collaboration as a baseline provided the researcher with a more accurate view of the interactions taking place within student groups, since the criteria for project-based learning fit neatly with the video projects in this case. Project-based is best when projects are central to the curriculum,

projects focus on problems, projects involve students in constructive investigation, and projects are student-driven. All of this pertained to the research in this exploratory case study.

Specifically, the research study consisted of conducting student interviews (both individually/one–on-one and collectively in a focus group), a review of the course interactions, completion of a survey by all student participants, and review of the video projects by an independent panel of social-media video experts. The result: an increase in observed interactivity, collaboration, and a greater satisfaction with assignments that — in the opinion of the students — increased the chances of adding value to the skill set with which they would start their careers.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore students' experiences and perceptions of the emergent use of mobile App's as part of the educational and social interaction and to better understand what student's like/dislike about using mobile Apps in a learning environment. Specifically, this exploratory research examined the effect of using a social media video App in a classroom setting, where the participants were engaged in student-centered, project-based learning. The study was conducted at a mid-size, Mid-Atlantic university in one upper level course, in late May 2015, where a video project was to be created and used. Participants took a pre-research survey from the researcher, before beginning their video projects. For the four days that followed, all students were assigned into three groups of two to three student participants in each group. The groups spent their daily time creating, producing, shooting, editing, and finalizing a video project. All students were required to use an iPhone to access a video App. Following the creation of the video projects, the participants were interviewed individually and

also as part of a focus group discussion with all students present. The video projects were also analyzed by a video panel of experts.

The qualitative case study path of this research was designed as an exploratory investigation of the personal experiences of the participants interacting as they worked through their project-based video projects in a collaborative fashion, in their normal environment, both in a classroom and around the campus shooting their video projects, solely depending on the video App. Based on the findings of this exploratory research, the students embraced student-centered learning using a video App. At the same time, the overarching theme emerged of increased engagement promoted by this approach. Three specific themes emerged founded on benefits for individual students, who experienced increased interaction, collaborative learning, and greater exposure to experiences in the classroom; this last known as experiential learning, which they perceived as adding value to their anticipated careers. The study revealed that, while this was not the position taken by all participants at all times, it was clearly the majority and consensus opinion.

The goal of this case study was to explore three underlying research questions:

RQ1   How does the use of a spcial media video App impact student learning in a traditional higher education classroom?

RQ2   What is the impact of a social media video App in the collaborative student-ceneteered learning process?

RQ3   How is experiential learning affected by the use of a video, shooting and editing

App?

Interactive Learning

Time and again the student participants in this case study expressed what an advantage it was to work in a project-based environment interacting with fellow classmates. By contrast, multiple times the students voiced their concern and dislike for what they described as "teacher-heavy" involvement, what research calls teacher-centered learning. It is notable that the findings so closely follow the predictions of researchers in this field, with Tapscott (2009), for example, saying that education has been forcing a change from a teacher-focused model pedagogy based on instruction to a student-focused model based on collaboration. The participants were especially vocal that they preferred this, a non-traditional method for learning. Thus they felt strongly positive about the freedom to utilize interactive learning, to collaborate with classmates on completion of a project and to feed off of their experiential background as they created their video projects in this case study.

This opinion, echoed by all of the participants, was exactly the reaction predicted by Hussain (2012) who observed that learning under the constructivist approach, students enjoyed academic autonomy — having benefits of the self-directed learning making them independent and self-decisive in their learning choices; thus, students who actively participated in their learning also enjoyed the classroom experience more. The three emerging themes from the research aligned nicely with previous research in this field and the review of the literature.

The Pre-Research Student Survey given to the participants in this study, established a benchmark for the questions concerning the use of a video App in a classroom project. Clearly

the vast majority, 71% of the participants said they were either very positive or somewhat positive about the use of a video App in their learning environment. Indeed, among the remaining 29%, there was no negative impression of the impact of a video App in a classroom project. All of the remaining participants said they were neutral. During the observation by the researcher, one of the unidentified students was heard saying "… using mobile Apps increased my ability to learn from the others." This is consistent with the literature regarding student learning with technology, as these students want to take part in selecting the content and then creating the learning experience with an emphasis on the interactive learning (McCombs & Whisler, 1997). Research has supported that today's students, those who know and use everything digital, enjoy being engaged in class where technology is used instructionally. This new type of learner is often dubbed a "digital native," as stated in the work of Palfrey and Gasser 2008) and supported by Cowan (2008).

This is consistent with the review of the literature for this study. Because digital natives have grown up with ever-changing technologies, they are more than likely going to have different expectations and behaviors toward the use of digital media than their teachers do (Huang et al., 2012). In short, it is not surprising that the students in this case study, ranging in age from 19-25, embraced this technology and its impact in their learning. They (digital natives) mark the first generation to grow up with everything from cell phones to instant messaging (Junco & Cole-Avent, 2008). The research supports that today's digital native students enjoy being engaged in a class where technology is used instructionally.

This increased engagement provided an insight into the nature of the enthusiastic approach by the students, digital natives who — because of the familiar and positive nature of the digital tools — found themselves interacting more with both the instructor and other students

in the classroom. Paul (2013), considering today's "digital natives," said that these so-called traditional teaching and learning styles often practiced in a traditional classroom setting, might not be nearly as effective for the digital minds of today's students, seeking non-traditional methods of learning, going on to predict greater interaction.

As noted earlier, each of the research questions generated a unique theme and when taken as a whole, showed increased involvement and engagement flowing from this more experiential and project-based learning approach. Two of the case study participants, in explaining the two dimensions along which this theme emerged in answer to one of the research questions, noted the significant increase in interaction with both other individuals (the personal dimension, an observation introduced in a previous chapter, and the digital — wherein the nature of the instruction increased their use of a natural tool of the technology-savvy student of today). Students today need a digital edge to learn, helping them in new jobs where technology requires them to master a steep learning curve.

Collaborative Learning

Once again, the respondents in this study overwhelmingly believed that the social media video App was key in a collaborative, student-centered learning environment — the second theme that emerged. Indeed, the Pre-Research Student Survey taken by participants before the video projects were begun, showed 71% had a very positive or positive attitude about using a video App. Following the use of the application, the numbers saw no decline staying at or above 71%, with a few students actually rating their attitude about the video application higher, at 75%.

When the participants in the research were asked about collaboration, the respondents were unanimous that the use of a video App enhanced their desire for a student-centered

environment. Wayne said just hands-on, makes for better learning. Joseph echoed that saying they could make their own mistakes and learn from them, with less pressure. Robert saw this project-based learning as "a way to learn from those around him, because each brought something different to the project." Hanna noted that in the end the video project came out better for having had several people involved in the project-based learning. Indeed, research shows that involving students in the learning process is most successful with students engaged in implementing active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Meyers & Jones, 1993).

The research validates that this new wave of internet technologies is contributing to new forms of learning among this generation of learners (Wang 2014). Vygotsky (1978) adds that learning is a process that requires input from the environment of the students and through social interaction. He notes that scaffolding, building upon a foundation through constructivism, is where peers act as motivators to reach the next level. Hanna and Cathy, for example, expressed how important working alongside a fellow classmate made the project that much more engaging and served to motivate them.

One of the underlying theories framing this research was the constructivist theory, especially relevant when considering the second research question. Results suggest that learning with mobile App's promotes a social constructivist learning environment which makes the newly acquired knowledge useful to the students. Stage, Nuller, Kinzie, and Simmons (1998) validateed this approach, having pointed out that the approach to education so impressive to the students in this case was a constructive approach that stressed the development by students of their own knowledge and subsequent meanings.

Experiential Learning

On the digital side of learning, which was the focus of this case study research, it became clear that students are less concerned with speed and quality in the video projects and more concerned with the experience of using digital with immediacy. Because of using an iPhone or other slower connected products, many students prefer medium to low quality for their videos, so buffering is not an issue (Lagger & Marques, 2012) as much, as Philip and Garcia (2013) noted, the iGeneration's desire to "want it all and want it now."

Experiential learning is enhanced by a digital approach for students who show an affinity for new media (McMillan & Morrison, 2006), as expected in a student raised with all things digital and thus often considered far advanced in digital technology for learning (Cowan, 2008). Thus, Philip and Garcia (2013) appeal to educators to embrace and enhance experiential learning by valuing student-centered learning based on student characteristics. The results of this case could certainly have been predicted: the participants agreed that experiential learning provided them with the glue for learning. "It sticks in my memory more" was the way Wayne put it during the interviews. Meanwhile, Joseph saw the classroom as now mirroring the world of potential employers, who would be impressed by his experiencing the opportunity to "throw around ideas" in much the way it would be done in his desired career. The two sub-themes which emerged from the research under the experiential frame were both a personal and digital experience. On a personal level, prior research appears to support students meeting students at the social media crossroad (McMillan & Morrison, 2006).

However, the research demonstrated this is more than just digital natives who like all things technology. Indeed, today's tech savvy students want to engage both content and the

technology at the same time for employers and potential employers. Indeed, the research supports this, as they (digital natives) mark the first generation to grow up with everything from cell phones to instant messaging (Junco & Cole-Avent, 2008) — with both the technology content of the job blending with the technology content of their personal lives, all extending now, in this study, to the technology content of learning in this different, more social situation. Out of this emerges the evidence for the third theme, focused through the observations of the third research question. This emphasized the additional benefit accrued through this third theme, an enhanced classroom experience. This allowed students to sample the work they desired to later do on both a personal and digital level — in a word, relevance. Through this learning approach and the emergence of a third theme, relevance became a focal point for the students or, as Megan put it, someone "experiencing, or sampling strategies and tasks similar to that (of my potential) career."

Discussion

The following is a discussion of the findings from the perspective of the theoretical framework for this study. The results showed that students feel comfortable using a video App, to construct their own project in a classroom environment. Based on the findings of this study, an individual student does, indeed, prefer technology or digital media and a student-centered, project-based, interactive approach to learning. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivist model, as the participants worked in groups of two to three students as assigned by the instructor. The current literature clearly articulates the need which students have, to be engaged with technology through action learning, which is hands-on engaged learning, not a passive instruction heavy model of learning. The results of this study confirm — and often dramatically — the direction of the literature of the field.

During the course of the interviews, the students expressed that there were times in which they were uncertain about how the video application would work, though all stated the video App was user-friendly and easy to use. They also indicated it made the project-based learning for this course far easier than they anticipated it might before using the video application. At the same time, the students saw this occasional uncertainty not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to learn more and sharpen their skills.

The themes that emerged were beneficial, in that this approach generated a positive and engaging environment. As Megan pointed out, "By the second day, I really liked coming to class, I got something out of it." The case study revealed that in general, there was an openness from the students to student-centered, project-based learning with the use of this new video App technology. They engaged both on a person-to-person level, with enhanced human communication, and on a digital level, with exposure to and use of a social technology encouraging greater and more sophisticated use of the technology as the week wore on. It was evident that project-based learning is associated with the challenge of real-world problems, thereby stimulating the motivation and interest of the students. This appeared to result in an increase in critical thinking and a more social, engaged environment.

A review of the literature indicted it, and this study confirmed it: university students are not learning in the same fashion as previous generations. This study provided confirmation of the literature and, in addition, extended the notion of differential learning by providing a framework of themes flowing from the data created in investigating the three research questions. Essentially, the three themes arising out of this research centered on the benefits to students of a participatory approach revolving around the use of a social media digital tool in the classroom.

The themes enhanced student learning and are different ways to involve the participatory aspects of the student in the classroom: interactive, collaborative, and experiential. Each theme, in addition, has two facets involving personal participation and digital participation. The emergence of these themes and sub-themes from the research lends credibility to both the overwhelming direction of the literature and the findings in this study, in which a major participatory paradigm shift in learning is underway. Today's digital natives show an affinity for new media (McMillan & Morrison, 2006); traditional teaching is not enough for today's students Paul (2013); cooperative learning results in positive outcomes Johnson (1975). In fact, Jarvis (2006) said learning for adults is not isolated by an interactive phenomenon, where the learning process is focused on active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Meyers & Jones, 1993). Gonzales and Nelson (2005) stated it clearly: "experiential learning is the process where learners actively engage in creating their own knowledge; experience is the teacher. Students learn by doing — rather than by listening — in a hands-on, meaningful and highly applied environment."

This paradigm change hinges on a shift from traditional teacher-centered learning to learner-centered education (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright & Zvacek, 2003). For the students in this study, it was indeed "all about me" in that they were clearly energized by the opportunity to participate in their education. As predicted by the literature, student-centered learning shifts the focus on them (students), requiring the student to be actively engaged in the learning process (Blumberg, 2009). This research emphatically underscores these conclusions drawn from the body of litereature in previous chapters, which points to the increased value of collaboration over traditonal teaching, especially when using social media technology, such as blogs, Wiki, or social networking (Moody, 2010). Indeed, Freire (1993) was joined by researcher Jane Vella (2000) who said this type of education then moves beyond lecture into interactive engagement,

which Vella said calls for instructors to be designing classes for dialogue. Hasse (2014) posited exactly what this study later found, that a teacher who turns a "hierarchical relationship with students into one of collaboration and collegial participation, the result is a learning environment framed by active dialogue" (p. 45).

In the interactive theme, enhanced give-and-take with other students and the instructor promoted more activity in the classroom and, especially, a deeper dive into the digital project and hence more discovery — an enhanced type of learning that, as Vella (2000) posited, "is the practice of accountability, responsibility, and teamwork all in one, as learners with new content — theories, skills, and attitudes — to complete a learning task together" (p. 6). In other words, this activity theme, or interaction, set the stage for more of the participation of the students in the project. Jarvis (2006) also predicted this outcome, saying that for adults learning is becoming an interactive model, not what may have previously been seen as an isolated internal model. This research points to a significant portion of the student population that is looking for student-centered, project-based learning, where the student not the instructor drives the learning.

At this point, the focus shifts to the second theme, that of collaboration. This theme requires engaged participation, and places these study results squarely in the mainstream of the emerging literature, which finds that the new definition of andragogy is to be expanded from passively consuming content to actively participating in a dialogue which leads to support of individual goals and needs (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). The students in this study may be considered emblematic of today's "digital natives," and the emerging themes, interactivity, collaboration, and experiential approach, encountered in each along both a personal and digital dimension. The themes emphatically reinforce the notions that traditional teaching and learning

styles might not be nearly as effective for the digital minds of today's students, who seek and embrace non-traditional methods of learning.

The participants in this case study seemed to express — without realizing it — the core of the Experiential Learning Theory, which appeared to play a critical part in their being interested in accessing the mobile App for the video project. Participants engaged actively with the content, which connected both their prior and current experiences. In other words, both past and present merged into a single affective and satisfying classroom experience. Robert put it this way: "I wish I had a program like this App two years ago, it's about time; I really like it". Meanwhile, Joseph exhibited increased energy, enthusiastically stating that "this App could change the face of journalism…"

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The findings from this study have important theoretical implications to the field of education and student-centered, project-based learning. The case study provided an extension to the Experiential and Constructivist Learning Theories. Specifically, instructors can more fully understand the role of experiential or constructivist learning, through the lived experiences of the students in this case study. Each of the participants exhibited a strong sense of student-centered, project-based learning as they viewed themselves possessing unique attributes for their classroom learning experience. This study provides both an extension and enhancement of experiential, constructivisit, action learning, and adult learning. According to Merriam and Caffarella (1999), the adult learner brings his or her experience to the table, thereby enhancing learning. The participants in this study not only connecteed with prior experiences, but they used

those experiences to enhance the involvement in the current project. They then projected

forward to the possible effects of those experiences on future projects they anticipated working

on outside the classroom. In other words, they made a connection to something they might come

across in the future. Each student opined that their innate abilities to learn and teach each other,

which stemmed from the experience(s) each brought into the classroom during the study,

contributed to the positive outcomes of the study. Each participant was admittedly a self-

described "digital native," possessing all things digital in their past. Thus this response from

Joseph is illustrative of the benefit of experiential learning for the digital native and their ability

to learn:

> We were able to talk about things, and I might go off track on an idea, and someone in
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> my group could bring me back. Well, we need to focus on this, and I would be able to do
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> the same thing with our group. So, it kind of enables you to be, in some ways, your peers
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> are teaching you, and you're teaching them, and you're kind of doing it all together.

Theoretical implications can also be concluded from this case study research when

utilizing the Constructivist Learning Theory as described by Van Der Westhuizen, Richter, and

Nel (2010), who see the constructivist approach as focusing on problem-solving and stimulating

the students' environments through tasks (Roblyer et al., 1997; Abdal-Haqq, 1998). In the

interview responses, the student participants did not describe themselves specifically as

"constructivists." However, their responses demonstrated that they were quite comfortable in

creating and constructing their own learning, especially as regards using a social meda App.

While each participant relayed the importance of the freedom to bring their experience to

the class and to work as a group with their video projects, they also acknowledged the shift this

creates between teacher and student. This shift was predicted by Vella (2000) and points to the possibility of an increasingly popular paradigm shift taking place, in which "helicopter" professors — who hover above and around students — are morphed into mentors, working with increasingly independent students and offering advice — much on the lines of great managers who mentor. However, now comes potential application of this paradigm change to the field of digital media education. Digital education is evolving to a more participatory and experiential paradigm from its foundation in journalism, in which journalists have traditionally told consumers what to think at the same time many professors were telling journalism students the same.

Practical Implications

On the practical side, consider the paradigm shift of the classroom experience which may be offered to students with this case study research utilizing the video App for a class video project. This research has implications for instructors and curriculum coordinators as new methods are developed to engage today's "digital natives" in the classroom. Johnson and Johnson (1975) reported positive outcomes decades ago, from cooperative learning, including increasing higher level reasoning and enhancing transferring of learning between situations. This study does the same, giving a voice to the lived experiences of the student participants when being able to use a video application in class. The responses of the participants in this case study offer a greater understanding into how and why constructivist, collaborative learning is valuable to a student. Because students have an opportunity to get into the trenches and confront the complex, messy aspects of real-world projects, students who learn in this type of setting have a more sophisticated understanding of the subject matter, as well as better technical and collaborative skills. As students face numerous ill-structured problems, that they have to work

through, developing problem-solving and critical-thinking skills that are significantly better than students who have learned in a traditional setting (Johnson & Johnson, 1975, p. 15).

Hussain (2012) observed "that learning under constructivist approach students enjoyed academic autonomy — having benefits of the self-directed learning making them independent and self-decisive in their learning choices" (p. 182). Thus a deeper knowledge of constuctivist, collaborative learning from the student perspective, as evidenced in this study, can better equip the instructor and curriculum developers in finding the optimum practice for learning for "digital natives." The students interviewed for this research overwhelmingly responded in the positive for hands-on project-based learning. "I really enjoyed the app…," commented one student, who then went on to express satisfaction with, "not just sitting in class having a teacher lecture on" the subject, but getting "my hands dirty." Thus, a more active, rather than traditional passive approach resulted in increased engagement and enthusiasm, with many layers of involvement and problem-solving. As one participant, Hanna, put it, "I think it prepares you more for the workplace, umm, just when, like collaborating with other people." She cited her part-time work in another university area where they handle their projects through collaboration.

Fosnot (1996) allows us to understand the views of Hanna and the others, who saw knowledge gained through the constructivist method built through what is called scaffolding, new knowledge is built upon prior knowledge. The other key component of this learning theory is knowledge gained through active interaction with the material or subject mattter, versus the passive interaction of older teaching methods. In all of this, the research questions shaped the analysis of the participants, and the participant reactions then emerged in themes all predicated on using the past, enjoying the present, and positively anticipating the future.

This investigation shows that students are comfortable working both independently and collaboratively in exploring this App-based knowledge. This is research that could take so many of the education techniques that are evolving in other, more forward-looking education fields and apply it to the fields of both education and digital media, which is exploding with new tools. The results of this study were consistent with previous studies focused on tech-based learning, which researchers say can play a critical role in supporting social skills for groups of students (Hassan, Fing, & Idrus, 2011; Minocha, 2009; Woo & Reeves, 2008) and accountability for individual students (Caspi & Blau, 2008; Guo & Stevens, 2011; Resta & De Hoyos, 2005). This learning approach allows students to better understand and apply the plethora of tools now available through the wonders of social, mobile, and interactive-media, and jump-start their careers through enhanced creativity, knowledge, and project-based collaborative learning.

Limitations

While this qualitative case study may provide significant guidance toward a more holistic framework to build upon collaborative activities in a college classroom, it is but a start. It is important to note that this is only a single investigation with a very narrow scope. In addition, all of these students were enrolled in the same ARTS 352 class at the same university. Therefore, the students in this case study represent a distinct population within the university. As such, the sample was homogeneous and thus may not be representative of all the university students available for future research.

To be able to drill down further for similar research into the use of a social-media application in a traditional classroom setting, it is suggested that similar studies should be done in different classes, across one or more semesters, perhaps a full academic year. This would be

especially important, given that this case study was conducted during a four week intensive course. However, the actual video project, the interviews, and the focus group all took place in only a four day period. Thus this highly compressed exploratory study was limited by a very short window of time to explore, experiment, and collaborate using the video App. One might also consider expanding similar research to different colleges/universities involving different demographics.

Another potentially important limitation in this research was that all of the student participants were over eighteen years of age. The significance of that could be that younger age students certainly enter college and may be even more adept at digital technology. Another limitation might be that the students — although familiar with the type of project used in this study — were not digital media students, though their graphics program at this college required some video project work to be completed. Conducting a similar study with students immersed in digital media could potentially provide different results than this study. In addition, the participants in the case study research were not graded on the video project assignment. Thus there may have been little incentive to create a video reaching beyond minimal requirements.

Finally, while many agree that the benefits of technology in the educational environment appear to have much potential, there is one gap mentioned in the review of the literature worth returning to for consideration. Many teachers are considered digital immigrants — not having grown up in a digital world. Thus, they are on the opposing side of technology from the "digital natives" addressed in this case study research. While the availability of innovative technology is on the increase, many teachers will need to adjust, adapt, and even learn new programs/software, often with little to no training. Therefore, the concept of learning how to implement learner-

centered technology in a classroom is not a priority and a limitation on implementing the results of this research.

Recommendations for Future Research

There has been very little research done to examine the extensive potential for teaching and learning with these devices and methods (Rajasingham, 2011). It is possible that students will be able to create more professional products more quickly with these apps, leaping ahead of the professor. This research could enable the high-achievers in our field to grow dramatically, while holding out the possibility of engaging and energizing the previously low achievers. The dramatically positive consensus of the participants after using the digital Apps is fraught with meaning for future research. Future studies, for example could include:

- Dividing the student pool into quadrants, from lowest quartile to highest quartile, and study the differential effects of the use of Apps on student learning.

- Doing a longitudinal study, examining graduated cohorts and tracking success in the professional fields and correlate that with the amount of App-based instruction they received in classes.

- Examining the role of the teacher, in light of its effectiveness in the classroom today. As an example, in a learner-centered environment, the instructor is no longer the key content expert, but rather moves aside and allows student expertise to emerge.

- A study focusing solely on the instructor's experiences with student-centered learning, where a media application is at the center of learning.

- A study which could focus on the divide between traditional learning and online learning, with emphasis on self-direct, collaborative mobile technology.

- Study the possibility of a sea change in media teaching — and future studies could track the number of teachers adopting this method of instruction.

Recommendations for Teachers

Specifically, this case study research pointed to several key opportunities which could enhance the teacher-student experience. The use of an App in a classroom was embraced by these residential participants. What remains though is research and a discussion of how to utilize an App in an online learning environment. One of the issues online teachers face is a true lack of interaction and more importantly the collaboration experienced by the participants in this case study.

An exciting avenue to consider would be the use of an App for students to create (read collaborate) on a similar video project to what was explored in the case study. Consider a student in Virginia, along with one in California, and a third in Florida. All three could be assigned to a group project online, where some sort of a video is required. In the collaborative stage, the three would contribute their portion from their own location and as a group it would be cobbled into a video project for submission online. Now the student-centered learning explored and embraced by the case study participants in this research would be a model for an online version.

Another possible use of the App method for engaging students and encouraging collaboration could come in other residential classes. As addressed in this case study research and listed as a limitation, this case study was very narrow in focus, with one class in a Studio and

Digital Arts course, where some video was being used. The use of a specific collaborative App, which may exist or could be created by students in higher education (yet another use of collaboration and the interaction model seen in this research), would allow students in virtually any subject matter to collaborate. Whether a math class, a government class, a psychology course, or a music course, using an App to engage students in the interactive value of learning as a group or team, would have widespread positive impact.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the use of a social media video App in a classroom setting, where student-centered, project-based learning was the focus. The literature review pointed to a new type of learner often dubbed a "digital native" (Palfrey and Gasser 2008). This study emphatically confirmed the value of students being able to create project videos, using smartphone technology, rather than by traditional means, with a camera, external editing, and production using video and editing equipment. It also demonstrated the possibilities for more positive and engaging instruction by pairing new technology with a new breed of student better equipped and hungry for self-directed education. These students saw the use of a video App in self-directed, group circumstances as desired, beneficial, and user friendly, promoting an increasingly positive classroom environment as the week progressed. One student, Hanna, said "I can't believe it — I'm actually enjoying coming to class in the summer!"

The study created a new media-based leaarning environment that was more participatory, involving communication processes that flowed in several directions — all guided by the interactions of the students with each other, the instructor, and the digital technology. The study confirms not only the direction of the literature of the field, but offers unusually clear insight into

the most effective techniques for instruction going forward, in both digital video education and, perhaps, for other fields such as integrated marketing. In reality, there are few areas of instruction that could not benefit from students spending a week in intense study, interaction, and hands-on projects, and then exiting the class with the comment, as one participant did, "Hey, this was fun!"

For educators, this exploratory case study offers unlimited potential for a new wave of teaching and learning in a classroom. Indeed, the process of teaching can easily shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, specifically where digital technology is integrated into the classroom in the form of a social media App. The participants in this case study pointed the way for instructors to integrate digital communication skills, with which students are intimately familiar and anxious to implement in a learning environment, if teachers will but trust them to bring their experiential knowledge to the table. One of the students in this research said it best, "you know we all have smartphones now, so why can't we be smarter about how we learn?"

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: **Pre-Research Student Survey**

Dear student,

The following questionnaire is being used to help determine which students within this Strategic

Communication course best meet the following criteria for this research case study. Please circle

one letter under each numbered question below for the answer to each question:

1) Please print your full name: _____

2) Please verify that you are at least 18 years of age, circle one of the following: **YES   NO**

   If you marked YES, please answer all remaining questions.

3) Length of experience in creating a video project:

   a. Never created a video project

   b. Less than six months

   c. Six months to one year

   d. More than a year of experience

4) If you have previously created a video project, have you used a traditional method for

   creating that project such as a video camera and non-linear editing equipment? Did you

   create the lower-third graphics for the name(s) of those in the video?

   a. Yes

   b. No

5) Have you ever considered using a social media video application (App) to create a video

   project on a smartphone or a tablet?

    a. Yes

    b. No

6) Have you used a social media video application (App) to create a video project on a

   smartphone or a tablet?

    a. Yes

    b. No

7) Rate your attitude toward using a social media video application (App) for creating a

   video project:

    a. Very positive

    b. Somewhat positive

    c. Neutral

    d. Somewhat negative

    e. Very negative

8) Rate your attitude toward using a social media video application (App) where student-

   centered learning and collaboration with classmates is the primary method of instruction:

    a. Very positive

    b. Somewhat positive

    c. Neutral

    d. Somewhat negative

    e. Very negative

APPENDIX B: IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 12, 2015

Bruce M. Kirk
IRB Approval 2200.051215: A Proactive, Experiential, and Student-Centered Learning
Approach: A Case Study of the Effects of a Social Media Video Editing "App" in a Traditional
Classroom Setting

Dear Bruce,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB.
This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your
protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the
methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update
form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research
project.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054

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APPENDIX C: EMAIL TO STUDIO ARTS AND DESIGN INSTRUCTOR

Dear _____ Strategic Communication Instructor,

My name is Bruce Kirk and I am pursuing a doctoral degree in Education from Liberty University. I would like to ask for your participation in a case study research. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of proactive student-centered learning through an in-depth examination of the effects on learning of introducing a student-centered social video editing application in a classroom for university students in an undergraduate residential class.

I am asking for your help in allowing me into your SADA ARTS 352 class for research on the use of a social media App in a student-centered learning environment. I would explain the use of a social media App for a video project for your class. I would outline the parameters of the video project, the teamwork expected with the App and the anticipated outcome for the project. Then I would ask for permission to observe their work with the social media App of their choice in one or two class periods. Following that, I would ask the selected students to agree to one-on-one interviews post-project, for my research.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and vital to the success of this case study.

Blessings,

Bruce M. Kirk, Ed.D. Candidate

APPENDIX D: STUDENT EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Student,

Thank you for your participation within this study and agreeing to take part in a follow up interview.

As previously indicated, the course in which you are currently enrolled, (course and section number), has been selected to participate in a study to review a portion of the student centered residential learning experience. The study had been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB Approval [Identification Number for IRB]), which oversees research conducted through or by this university.

As previously stated, the purpose of this case study will be to examine the nature of proactive student-centered learning through an in-depth examination of the effects on learning of introducing a student-centered social video editing application in a classroom for university students in an undergraduate residential class. The interview portion of this study will seek to better understand your experience and perception within a residential course. The interview would last approximately 30 minutes. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be required.

Your continued participation in this research would be greatly appreciated. A link to the informed consent has been provided below for your review and pertains to the interview which will be conducted. At the end of the document, you will be able to indicate that you have read the consent form and would like to take part in the interview.

(Hyperlink to Consent Form)

If you have any questions concerning the nature of the research or would like further clarification, please feel free to contact me at bmkirk@liberty.edu

Thank you,

Bruce M. Kirk

APPENDIX E: STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

Student Perception and Experience within a Residential Student-Centered Learning Environment

Bruce M. Kirk
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to participate in a research study which will look at your perception and experience within a residential learning environment. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a student for a required undergraduate course for communication students. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Bruce Kirk for the completion of the Doctor of Education degree through Liberty University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this research is to look at your experience within the residential learning environment and specifically as it relates to student-centered learning. The concluding results of this study will help identify practices which are beneficial to the facilitation of social media learner-centered instruction and areas for further research.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask that you commit to an interview which would be focused on your role as a student. The interview would last approximately 30 minutes and be recorded for transcription purposes.

Risk and Benefits of being in the Study:

Risks for this study are minimal as it is asking about your perception and experience as a student within a residential course. All interactions and comments will be kept anonymous.

The benefits to participation include a greater understanding of learner-centered education in a traditional classroom environment. Your perception and experience is a key to providing better understanding of the student-centered learning environment when using social media and the interactions which ensue.

Compensation:

No compensation will be given for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report published, information will not be included that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. All data collected will be saved in a password protected document. Pseudonyms will be assigned to the participants of the study and upon completion of the compilation of data all files which include the original names will be destroyed.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with (this institution). If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Bruce Kirk. You may ask any questions you have not. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at 434-582-7220. The contact information for Dr. Deanna Keith, doctoral faculty advisor is the following: 434-582-2417 or **dlkeith@liberty.edu**.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg VA 24515 or email at xxxxx@liberty.edu.

This email serves as a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

By responding to this email with my name inserted below, I have indicated that I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I give my permission to be audio taped.
_____ I do not give my permission to be audio taped.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____   Date: _____

IRB Code Numbers: **IRB Expiration Date:_____**

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

(Student)

Introduction: Hi I am Professor Bruce Kirk and I have been observing students engaged in student-centered learning in their classrooms. I would like to ask you a few questions about how you feel about using a Social Media Application (App) in class compared with traditional teacher-centered instruction. If there are any questions you do not wish to answer please let me know. Thank you for your time!

1. Explain what previous experience you have with video equipment?

2. In the past 3-months detail how many times have you used video equipment and in what type of project?

3. What type of experience with non linear editing software do you have, please explain?

4. In the past 3-months how many times have you used non-linear editing software and explain in what ways you used it?

5. Explain your experience in using any video and editing applications (Apps) accessed through a smartphone? Please describe the situation and outcome?

6. Explain why your experience in using a video and editing application on a smartphone was either positive or negative?

7. How was the use of a smartphone application for video and editing easier or more efficient compared to using traditonal video and editing equipment?

8. How did the use of a smartphone application for video and editing make final production of the product more compatiable with today's digital and social media?

9. In your experience with both traditonal video and editing, compared with a video and editing application for a smartphone, what were the advantages in using the smartphone application method over traditional video and editing?

10. How does pre-existing trust in a fellow student familiar with digital equipment, lend more confidence in utilizing a smartphone application to shoot video and edit, versus the use of traditonal video and editing methods?

11. Explain how new media methods for shooting video and editing a project using a smartphone application, would be preferred among "digital natives" due to the low barriers to entry (existing "digital native" knowledge) and the quick diffusion of information?

APPENDIX G: Focus Group Response Guide

The following are focus group response 'starters' to be used in encouraging conversation about the use of the app by students in this video project, and the rules that will guide the discussion. Students will be sourced anonymously in the reporting of this dissertation.

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Bruce Kirk and I want to thank all of you for participating in this exercise. I am on the faculty of the Department of Digital Media & Communication Arts, and I'm taking a look at how students view the use of social media apps when used for video projects.

Purpose:

The purpose of this next hour will be to give you the opportunity to voice your opinions and thoughts on the exercise you just participated in.

Rules for Confidentiality:

Your thoughts, your opinions are confidential—they won't be linked to you individually, nor will your names be used on quotes that I use in the written discussion of this exercise. You'll simply be identified in my account of the discussion as a female or male student participant.

Discussion Guidelines

There are no right or wrong answers as we talk—your opinions, your thoughts are valuable, whatever you express about your experience. The purpose of this is to get your insights into the use of this app as a tool for learning in the classroom. This is not a test or exam…just a conversation.

Getting Started:

Q-1:   So, let's get started—what is the single characteristic that stood out for you in the use of this social media application "App"?

Q-2:   Did you find you learned more or less, please explain?

Q-3:   Why do you think what you did in this assignment will stick with you…or not?

Q-4:   How important is student-centered learning, where you guide your own education?

Q-5:   How did the social media application "App" engage you in student-centered learning?

Q-6   How would you recommend using a social media application "App" such as you did in this class, in future classes?

APPENDIX H: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL FORM

Site:

A classroom at Freedom University will serve as the observation site. Also a map of the room will be utilized scanning left to right.

Length of Observation:

Students will be observed for the duration of a normal 50-minute or 90-minute class, depending on whether the course meets twice or three times a week.

Purpose of Observation:

To first note any faculty instruction for the student-centered learning assignment. Second, to observe how student-centered learning proactively involves a social media video App to complete a video project.

Actual Observation:

An observational protocol will be used to record notes in the classroom, both direct and reflective.

This form was taken and adapted from
http://www.english.gsu.edu/graduate/pdf/ClassroomObservationForm.pdf

The following guidelines have been established in order to accurately record the events which have taken place within this study. Basic structure of this observation will be recorded based on the modular in which the event took place in conjunction with the corresponding course section. The form below will be utilized for the recording of said events.

Course name: _____

Course number: _____

Course section: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

1. Describe the instruction by the teacher establishing a student-centered learning environment, i.e. uses of authority, language, or attitude toward students and attitude toward subject matter, etc.

2. Describe the student's relationship with the teacher and fellow classmates in the class, i.e. stance, comments, tone and responses directed to the teacher and/or fellow students, etc.

3. How well do the students use the class time for student-centered learning, i.e. ratio of listening to instructions, discussing course of action, actual experimentation and use of the social media App in class etc…?

4. How do the students work proactively with each other using the social media App in the classroom?

5. How do the students set up and practice the use of the social media App with the expected strategy of student-centered learning?

6. Do the students demonstrate familiarity/comfort with the expected freedom of the learner-centered method of teaching?

7. Are the students engaged in setting learning goals?

8. Do the students engage in making choices?

9. Are students engaged in discussing expectations of the video projects?

10. Are the students engaged in problem solving?

APPENDIX I: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Date:

Location:

Class:

Subject/Title:

Objective:

Length of Observation:

Learner-Centered Strategies Observed:

Student Engagement:

Teacher Comments:

Student Comments:

APPENDIX J: ARTS 352 VIDEO PROJECT RUBRIC

Content	Advanced	Competent	Developing	Beginner
Overall Production	Uninterrupted video Logical flow to video Smooth intro and conclusion Professional video Very Creative	Some interruptions in video Most of the video flowed Inconsistent Intro or Conclusion Better than average video Somewhat Creative	Several interruptions in video Some of the video flowed Average video project Average Creativity	Mostly interrupted video Very little flow to video Below average video Video lacked Creativity
Aesthetics	Excellent framing Professional level video Effective pacing Excellent locator or title graphic	Some framing issues Less than professional video Pacing is mostly effective Some graphic(s) was used	Poorly framed Average video Poor pacing Below average graphics	Framing is unacceptable Below average video Pacing is unacceptable Graphics non existent
Audio & Lighting	Excellent lighting Excellent audio levels No shadows	Most lighting is effective Some audio issues Some shadows	Lighting is average Multiple audio issues Lighting meets minimum standard	Poor lighting Audio includes distortion and over-modulation or audio is absent
Video Content	An air quality video Excellent focusing Excellent white balance Few pans, zooms or tilts Tripod or stable at all times	Nearly air quality Contrast/Focus is acceptable No color balance issues Very limited camera movement (zoom/pan/tilt) Tripod or steady camera used	Limited camera focus issues Contrast could be improved Some movement in camera shots(zoom/pan/tilt) Tripod or steady cam not evident at all times	Unframed shots Unfocused video White balance issues No tripod/stability used Too much movement (pan, zoom, tilt)
Timing	1 minute	:45-1:00 seconds	:30-:45 seconds	Less than :30 seconds

APPENDIX K: VIDEO REVIEW PANEL RUBRIC SPREADSHEETS

Video Project Group 1

	Dawn	Chris	Jeremy	Jack
Overall Production	Developing	Developing	Competent	Beginner
Aesthetics	Competent	Developing	Competent	Beginner
Audio & Lighting	Developing	Developing	Developing	Beginner
Video Content	Developing	Developing	Developing	Beginner
Timing	Competent	Competent	Competent	Competent

While the language of the video was casual and conversational to what seems to be the target audience (good), there are some basic video changes that need to be made for this piece to be ready for social media or any other media platform, such as: trimming the audio to cut out unnecessary noises/voices, stabilizing the camera, and picking different video transitions. Though the creative choice to utilize the dragon eye at the end makes sense, somewhat, it came across awkward, and may be a violation of copyright.—**Dawn**

Overall production: Lacks energy and flow. Needs music to connect narrative pieces. Narrative is flat. Also needs appropriate sound effects for the product (e.g., a gong when he tastes the product).
Aesthetics: Framing is rarely tight. Most of the shots are long vs. varying CU, XCU, MS, etc. Poor shot angles.
Audio/lighting: Lighting is too dark. Hot spots in the background due to video being shot outside without fill/reflectors. Ending has voice that should have been edited out. Sounds as though the narrative was recorded on the camera outside vs. in a studio and cut in as VO.
Video content: Some shaky camera. –**Chris**

The overall video length was an odd time at 48 seconds. While the content drove a solid point, several technical problems detracted from the message. Also, copyrighted material (dragon animation) was used presumably without permission from the owner (an automatic assignment failure in my classes). For amateur work the framing was fairly creative showing the audience different angles of the subject. Camera work was shaky having been shot on a cell phone with no steady shot capability, and lighting was in the shadows. There were several audio problems with extraneous noises, coughs etc., but this could have been edited out had the enterprise version of the software been used instead of the free version. This was not counted against the team. This was an overall solid concept and typical of beginners with lighting, focus, and sound issues present. The Videolicious software provides a music library, which was not used. Since this feature was available to the team, this omission was counted against the team. Music could have dramatically enhanced this piece. – **Jeremy**

The shot composition was unbalanced. Some of the shots had an excessive amount of headroom and it was under exposed. At a couple points, the director broke the 180. I was confused as to the purpose of the cuts in a crescent around the subject, they didn't have any intention to them. The voice over

content was clear however the quality wasn't professional. It had echoes to it and you could hear the movement of the operator's hands on the recording device. The biggest issue with the audio was the misplaced time of the cut, you could hear the director calling the camera shots after portions of the voice over. The shots were shaky and the cuts were choppy which took away from the overall flow of the video. This is not something I would air; it looks like a low quality YouTube video.—**Jack**

Video Project Group 2

	Dawn	Chris	Jeremy	Jack
Overall Production	Advanced	Competent	Advanced	Developing
Aesthetics	Competent	Competent	Competent	Competent
Audio & Lighting	Advanced	Competent	Advanced	Competent
Video Content	Developing	Competent	Competent	Developing
Timing	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing

This video was well done. Great use of music to add to overall production. Great featuring of product and product logo, with fairly good pacing. Could use some stabilization of camera. Because the video came in at 30 seconds, a great addition may be to add in someone from the target audience enjoying a kernel of popcorn---showing consumers that they can –and should—enjoy the popcorn, too.
--**Dawn**

Overall production: Pan shot at the beginning is too long for an ad of this length. Match the beat of the music to the shots (bounce between XCU and MS). Think about what popcorn looks like when it pops. There is no narrative, which is needed to talk about the product. Thus, there is no informational content. Would be better to see young people enjoying the popcorn at a party. Needs a mix of people faces, action and product. Aesthetics: Vary the shots CU, XCU, MS, etc. Framing is okay for the most part. Audio/lighting: Lighting is okay, but the white background lacks excitement.
Video content: Quality is okay, but need to use quick static shots vs. camera movement throughout. –
Chris

Group Two – Pop Pop Shop Popcorn:
The overall video length was 30 seconds. It is my understanding that the requirement was 60 seconds. The spot drove a solid point and was bright, clean and near professional work. Camera dolly was hand-held and went out of focus at one point. Also, copyrighted material (music) was used presumably without permission from the owner (an automatic assignment failure in my classes). For amateur work the framing was fairly creative showing the audience different angles of the subject. Camera work was shaky having been shot on a cell phone with no steady shot capability, but lighting was consistent and appropriate. This was an overall solid concept and above average for beginners. It is unclear if the song was provided through the Videolicious software music library, but was presumably sources elsewhere. –
Jeremy

The lighting was the first thing I noticed, it was even lighting that looked nice. Using the white background pulled out the colors and made the product stand out. After noticing the lighting, I was taken out of the video due to shaky shots when the camera operator dollied down the set of jars. The dollying was shaky and told me that the camera operator wasn't bracing him or herself during that move. The framing was acceptable however it did go out of focus a few times. The lighting quality got worse on the second shot, it became darker, there were more shadows and the images went out of focus for a moment. The audio was good, however it was just pre-recorded. Overall strong. - **Jack**

Video Project Group 3

	Dawn	Chris	Jeremy	Jack
Overall Production	Beginner	Developing	Beginner	Developing
Aesthetics	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Audio & Lighting	Developing	Beginner	Beginner	Developing
Video Content	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Timing	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner

Though there were minimal camera shake issues, the flow of this video was off---it didn't make sense, nor makes consumers want to buy the product. The choice of audio was slightly awkward, but video transitions worked well, and camera was steady throughout. Interesting/ odd use of background image in the intro. No branding imaging {logo} was used. Though this video was quirky, the team would need to develop a better video concept before it was ready to promote the brand. **–Dawn**

Overall production: Talent is in a jacket, then casual sitting on a couch, which lacks continuity. Why the mixture or selection of different scenes? Not clearly related to the story of the product. Needs continuity of music. Product name is not clearly seen. Never mentioned verbally. Also needs narrative content. Doesn't really tell a story about the product.
Aesthetics: Vary the shots CU, XCU, MS, etc. Framing lacks variety. Needs graphics other than the slogan (which is not needed as a graphic).
Audio/lighting: Lighting is dark. Low music at the beginning, then it disappears at the end.
Video content: Video quality is not clean, likely due to low lighting. **–Chris**

Group Three – Not Your Grandma's Popcorn: The overall video length was 24 seconds. It is my understanding that the requirement was 60 seconds. Thematically, the spot offers very little focus or interest. It is not clear what the product is. There is little information offered and no clear message of what the audience is supposed to do. Very poor lighting and sound compound the confusion. The VO was too soft and offered no information. The music was mildly pleasant. Camera work was at least steady and framed appropriately if not creatively. The opening popcorn shot tried to focus the audience's attention, but needed better lighting. **– Jeremy**

The video started with a couple of well-balanced shots with a vignette which told the viewer what to look for. It was a good use of the halves, shapes (final shot with the bowl) and head room. The shots were a little too shaky, I could tell there was no tripod used. I also noticed some of the shots were dark and under-exposed, I would have liked to see lights and brightened it up. The audio was not broadcast-worthy at all; it was too quiet and muffled. There was also an echo to the audio telling me that they probably recorded it straight to the camera from a distance --**Jack**

APPENDIX L RESEARCHER BRACKETING

An excerpt from an observation of a Studio & Digital Arts classroom during the case study research is shown below on the following page. The researcher used a reflective diary during the extended observations of the three assigned groups, over a four day period in May 2015. Each group worked to complete their video projects using a social media App. The researcher worked to gather information by discrete observation, attempting to understand how the participants being studied see things.

Gearing (2004) describes "epoche" as how a researcher's past experiences must be bracketed against the units of meaning. In this case a unit reflects a word, a sentence or a series of sentences as provided by a participant. Researchers often are required to put aside assumptions so that the true experiences of respondents are reflected in the research. Thus a researcher's past experiences coupled with the units of meaning combine to create reintegration which then results in interpretation.

The journal notes or jottings were not entered during the observations, so as not to distract the interaction and collaboration of the participants. Immediately after the observations, I found a quiet place alone and quickly entered my immediate thoughts and perceptions on a range of matters including the common themes; interactive, collaborative and experiential learning that were emerging. Preliminary lists for clustering identified and clustered by coding them together.

Observation notes: It is 11:00am on May 25. The class, Studio & Digital Arts 352 is beginning in room 2199. The instructor is present along with seven students, all of whom will participate in this case study. The instructor assigned the class participants to move into three groups; the three men Joseph, Robert and Wayne would work as one group. He assigned the four

remaining students to two groups of two each. Observing the men on the start of day one, Wayne quickly took control. He is a little boisterous, brash, bold and very opinionated. By contrast Robert is very quiet, introspective and polite. Joseph was willing to work with each young man and seemed to go with the flow. Two of the three men, Wayne and Robert, said they had already started to examine the App being used for the video projects. Obviously they looked it up online while the instructor and researcher were presenting the case study research idea in class. Joseph offered some integrity telling the other two "did you know this App lets us import video from another source, but they probably want us to shoot our own video, don't they?" One of the other men (unidentified) quickly answered "yea, we gotta do our own thing, I'm sure." The three asked a lot of questions such as "what angle are we gona take?", "do you want to be in the video?" (Joseph asked Wayne). Robert said "this is going to be a piece of cake, we can do this, we all know how to use App's and shoot video." Within minutes of this class starting the three men discussed how to split audio and how to stabilize the shots using an iPhone.

As a result of acknowledging my past experiences in creating videos and my awareness of their impact upon my perception of a personal reality, I was able to flag content within the observations, as being of potential consequence to the research objective.